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THE
SCOUT'S PRIZE
OR, THE OLD DUTCH BLUNDERBUSS.



GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS.

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SCOUT'S PRIZE;
OR,
THE OLD DUTCH BLUNDERBUSS.

A Tale of 1776.

By HERRICK JOHNSTONE.



[LONDON AND NEW YORK
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS.

THE SCOUT'S PRIZE.

CHAPTER I.

A KNICKERBOCKER HOMESTEAD.

IN the year 1776—and very probably for many years afterwards—there stood a quaint old three-gabled house on the east side of Broadway, New York, fronting the Bowling-Green. It was before the days of our old palatial storehouses, of our rumbling throngs of omnibuses, and busy sidewalks. Residences were mixed up with the stores, even on lower Broadway; and life itself was a sluggish stream, in contrast with the rushing river of our present existence—albeit, the tempests of human warfare were then, as now, upon the surface of the tide.

The old house evidently was a tavern. For, though there was nothing to that effect upon the dingy sign-post, which stood, like a sentinel, in front of the wooden stoop, on the top of the post there was a great gilded fish, and immediately under it, in letters still legible, the words: "The Golden Shark;" so we may infer that this fabulous specimen of natural history was an eccentric mode of expressing "Entertainment for man and beast." And, acting upon this inference, strengthened by the stable-yard adjoining the premises, you would, upon entering the house-door, soon come to a definite conviction by the appearance of another sign, placed above the beer-counter within, whereon it was set forth that "Gotlieb Von Snooze" was the "Proprietor of the Golden Shark."

In the early part of the month of August, 1776, a sturdy young fellow, of prepossessing appearance, in the partial uniform of a Continental soldier, might have been observed endeavouring to conceal himself behind the shrubbery of the Bowling-Green, while he watched with wistful eyes the open door of the Golden Shark. Presently, a young girl—and, let

me tell you, she was as sweet and handsome as the smiling morning itself—flitted past the opening of the door within. And then the young man immediately left his covert, and entered the tavern with a fearless step. At the sound of it, she turned, and went toward him in glad surprise. As for the young man, he took her in his arms and kissed her in a very lover-like and pleasant manner.

"Here I am again, you see, Katrina," said he, "healed of my wound, and—pleasanter still—with the ring I promised. Give me your finger."

The girl extended a finger of her little brown hand, and the young man slipped upon it a plain gold ring, which he drew from his waistcoat pocket, fondly kissing it before he slid it upon her finger.

"It is very beautiful, Joe," said Katrina, with downcast eyes; but I'm half sorry you bought it."

"And wherefore, my darling?"

"Because we must save our money now," said she. "I but asked you for a present in a moment of thoughtlessness; and you must need the money which procured it."

"You are quite a little housewife, already," he replied, laughing. "But I love you all the more for your goodness. And how is my pearl of Manhattan?"

"Well enough, Joe; only a little anxious on your account. But tell me, are you really well, at last?"

"Perfectly, darling! And what do you guess? I am discharged from the service. Time up, you know."

"Bless me! I am glad of it! You will now remain in New York, will you not? What will you do?"

"Join the army again, of course!"

Her face fell at these words.

"No, Joe," she exclaimed. "You have already been your year in the army."

"But the red-coats are on Long Island, and my old comrades confront them with decimated ranks," said the young man, resolutely. "I intend to fight for General Washington, whenever he needs me."

“Forgive my selfishness,” said the maiden, with a brighter air. “Our parting will not be for long, I hope, and—”

She broke off, with a blush, and drew away from her lover’s side. He was also confused ; for at that moment an inner door opened, and Gotlieb Von Snooze entered the bar room, with a cloud of displeasure upon his red face. The case was clear at a glance. There was a skeleton in the closet of our lovers—there was a “stern parent” in the background.

Gotlieb evidently was quite a character. Good-humoured withal, his effort to be severe was a comical exhibition. It would have required a larger shark than the gilded monster upon his sign-post to have swallowed Gotlieb. He evidently weighed in the neighbourhood of half five hundred-weight—more or less. His rubicund features and ease-loving air gave token of well-to-do circumstances ; and the vast satin waistcoat, which displayed to every advantage his lumbering girth of paunch, bespoke a certain complacency with himself which no one but a successful landlord can assume. He now had a lordly air, as he advanced toward the disconcerted lovers, and his broken English was imbued with severity as he addressed the delinquent Joseph :—

“Vat for you goes mit mine Katrina, eh, you young vagabone?” exclaimed Gotlieb. “Vat for you forgets mine in joonction, eh?”

The young man suddenly forgot his embarrassment, and spoke out boldly :—

“I return to Katrina because I love her and she loves me, mynheer,” said he. “You said if I distinguished myself in the war you would—”

“Oh, yah !” said Gotlieb, with a sneer. “So you be von general, now, eh ? or von colonel ? Vel, vel, vat do you makes ?”

“I am neither a general nor a colonel, yet,” said the young man ; “but I fought well at Ticonderoga, if I sⁿ, it myself ; and General Arnold made me a sergeant for it. And I fought better at Quebec, was wounded in the thigh, and am promised a lieutenant’s commission, next week.”

The proprietor of pretty Katrina and the Golden Shark shook his head, but there evidently was a mitigation of his scorn for the young man's suit.

"Pretty vell for a beginning," said he ; "but nutting but von capting can have Katrina. Vy, she has already had von offer from a colonel, and vouldn't have him. 'Tis de vay mit de vomans, Joseph. If I vasn't so old, I vould shoulder de yager myself, and go mit Vashington. See, I vould grasp de veapon of mine faders, and rush to de vars, for de liberty."

As he spoke, the old man reached over the counter and took from its stays a formidable old blunderbuss, of the most ancient type—short and thick, huge in the butt, with a muzzle like a funnel—which appeared as if a pound of powder and a quart-measure of slugs would be but a moderate charge. Gotlieb put on a somewhat gladiatorial air as he shouldered this piece of ordnance, and his tones were of a martial order as he cried :—

Forward, march ! fight him for de faderland !" And he began to strut the bar-room to the martial music of an imaginary drum and fife.

"Bravo !" cried the young man, with difficulty containing his mirth. "Bravo ! And now give me a parting kiss, Katrina, for I am off."

"Joe, Joe, dear Joe ! where are you going !" sobbed Katrina, with her arms about his neck.

"To earn my captain's commission !" replied the youth, resolutely ; and, with a last loving embrace, he sprung through the open door, and was gone.

Katrina sat down on a bench, and cried as if her little heart would break. Her father returned the blunderbuss to its place on the wall, and then stood before his daughter, looking as if about to blubber himself.

"Vat for you make so much cry, my darling ?" he asked.

"Because you sent Joe away. He—he'll be killed—I—I know he will !" sobbed the girl, with the corners of her white apron at her eyes.

Old Gotlieb sat by her side, and took her upon his knees.

"Listen, mine little von," said he. "Joe is von fine young feller. You tinks dat I don't like him? Den you don't know your fader. I likes de young man, but I wants him to do more for de coountry. By keeping you away from him, I spurs him onvard. Never fear; he vill makes glory and coom back in von little vile. Dere, dere!"

His voice was tender and sweet, and Katrina laid her pretty head upon his massive shoulder, and began to dry her tears.

CHAPTER II.

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

A SHORT distance from the door of the Golden Shark, and Joe's brisk pace slackened perceptibly, until he fell into a moody saunter, and the cheerfulness went out of his face in the same proportion.

The young man began to ponder upon the captain's commission. His face grew longer as he did so; for then, even more than now, a musket in the ranks was much more easily obtained than the pomp and circumstance of a sword and sash. In the midst of his despondent meditation, and while he was standing on the curbstone, a cavalryman, who was riding past, suddenly halted and hailed him. Joe looked up and saw a friend. Mutual greetings were exchanged.

"And how about your lieutenancy?" asked the horseman. "You have a blue look for such a fortunate fellow."

"I want to be a captain," said poor Joe, laconically.

"What, already?" exclaimed the other, laughing. "Nevertheless, I believe there's a chance for one up there at head-quarters."

"Where? How?" exclaimed Joe, eagerly.

"The General is in search of a scout for a service of extreme danger. But you'd better not apply. They say that capture and a hempen cravat is by far the likeliest reward to be won. I must be off. Good-bye."

And the horseman put spurs to his steed, while the young man hastened to head-quarters. In a few moments he was there.

So intent was he upon an immediate audience, that he paid no attention to the throng upon the pavement, and was about to go up the steps, when his progress was arrested by the crossed bayonets of the two guards at the door.

"Halt! Your business?"

"I wish to see General Washington," said Joe.

"For what?"

"I heard that he wanted a scout for special service, and I thought —"

"Pass in."

The young man entered the building, and was ushered up stairs into an antechamber, where he was left alone. He had ample time for reflection; and was soon lost in thought, as he gazed out upon the water; for the window overlooked the broad expanse of New York Bay, and you could see through the Narrows, though the weather was hazy, with now and then a glimpse of the topmasts of some British blockader on the outside. Presently, a voice of singular depth and sweetness commingled aroused him from his reverie. He turned quickly, and a feeling rushed into his heart to seize the hand of the man before him and cover it with kisses. As it was, he made a low obeisance, for he was in the presence of George Washington.

"You wished to see me, my friend?"

The General's voice was so kind, and his manner so reassuring, as well as dignified, that Joe's embarrassment gave way to confidence, and he had no hesitation in saying:—

"Yes, General. I desired that honour, because I heard you were in need of a special scout."

"I do need such a person," said the General. "Your name and rank, if you please?"

"My name is Joseph Wilder," said the youth. "I am at present convalescent, and out of service, but am in daily expectation of my commission as lieutenant."

"The special service I have in view is of extraordinary risk, lieutenant."

"I am fond of danger, General."

The General smiled.

"Is that the only reason you seek the present employment?" he inquired.

"No, General, it is not. To tell the truth, I — I — in fact, I —"

In a few moments, General Washington knew all about pretty Katrina, Gottlieb Von Snooze, the old Dutch blunderbuss, and everything else pertaining to the Golden Shark tavern.

"I will gladly engage you, lieutenant," said the commander, still smiling, "and have no fear but that a captain's commission will attend success in the enterprise. I am a man of few words. Listen: the English have landed on the upper part of the island -- Long Island -- with their vanguard between Utrecht and Gravesend. There is a place called Bushy Cave somewhere on the shore behind Utrecht. Do you know the place?"

"I was born within a mile of it, General."

"Good. General Howe has his head-quarters in the vicinity of this place. General De Heister's is not far off. I expect an attack at any moment, but desire to know *the* moment. There is, I think, but one mode of obtaining this information."

"And that mode, General?"

"Is to cavedrop at General Howe's tent, or at De Heister's -- for they are intimate friends, and are probably frequently in each other's tents. Can you perform this mission?"

"Yes, General."

"I admire your courage; but do not underrate the peril. You must even find out the position of the British commander's head-quarters. They are probably in the heart of the enemy's army."

"General, I am willing to take the chance. I shall perform the service, if possible."

"I believe you. When you have obtained all the information possible, before returning to me, you must communicate it to General Sullivan, commanding our troops on the island. Now you know my object, what is your plan of procedure?"

"To pull up the bay to-night, land beyond Utrecht, and then push in through their lines."

"That is the boldest—therefore the best. How many men do you desire to accompany you?"

"None."

"What, alone?"

"Yes, General; the fewer feet the less noise."

"It is well," said the commander. "Do you desire any thing for an outfit?"

"Only your blessing, General."

"You have it, my lad, with all my heart," said the commander, cordially. "And—wait a moment."

He pulled a bell-cord, and a servant appeared.

"Wine."

And, in a few moments, the wine also appeared.

The General filled two glasses, presented one to Lieutenant Wilder, and took the other himself. Then, touching the lieutenant's glass with his own, he said, with his beautiful smile :—

"Lieutenant, this is to your safe return, and—to pretty Katrina."

Joe blushed happily as he drank this pledge. Then he arose, saluted the General with profound respect, and left the room.

CHAPTER III.

THE RIVALS.

THE entrance of the young patriot to the bar-room of the Golden Shark had been watched by jealous eyes. And scarcely had he quitted the tavern before the man who observed him so closely stepped from a pretentious house, and

crossed the street to the tavern, which was immediately opposite. He entered the bar-room, and called for some beer. By the obsequiousness with which old Gotlieb served the beverage, the stranger was evidently of some consequence. His garb and mien also indicated affluence. There was a military affectation in his attire, which was of much elegance ; nevertheless, he would most likely be taken for a civilian.

This man, a Tory, named Gilbert Whipple, had held office under the King in the revenue service. As a natural consequence, his sympathies were wholly, though secretly, with the Royal cause. Some would have called him handsome. His form was, indeed, elegant and his manners refined ; but there was an expression of the eye and lip which would have excited distrust in the mind of one capable of reading the heart of men by their face.

He gazed earnestly at Katrina—who was still sad from her parting with Joe—but seated himself in silence at one of the little tables of the bar-room. Presently he said :—

“Have you any news of what is taking place on the island, mynheer?”

“Naw, Mr. Vipple. Dey keeps it all to demselves, now-a-tays.”

The gentleman evidently had asked the question merely to say something, and he relapsed, for some moments, into his former silence, though still gazing at the drooping figure of the girl. Then he again said :—

“Pray, order my horse, mynheer ; I must ride to Harlem. And, while you are about it, please buy for me that new bridle which I saw in the saddler’s window, a few doors above here.”

“Certainly, Mr. Vipple.” And Gotlieb left the room accordingly.

He had scarcely disappeared, before Katrina heard the gentleman call her by name. But his voice was so low that she was not certain.

“Katrina, come here ; I wish to talk with you.”

This time there was no mistaking, but the voice was singularly low and musical, and strangely at variance with that with which he had addressed her father.

She approached with some hesitation ; but she started back, indignant and alarmed, for the gentleman suddenly drew her toward him, and kissed her cheek.

"Pshaw, child ! I'm old enough to be your father," said he soothingly ; but the blush remained on Katrina's cheek.

"Come, sit beside me here," he continued. "I wish to talk with you."

She drew still further away.

"The gentleman can speak with me at this distance," she said, quietly.

"No ; come, sit down here."

There was a sternness—very slight, yet still perceptible—in his tone, now ; and the gentleman must have been a mesmerist, for he raised his hand, and drew the maiden, still unwilling, to his side, as a magnet draws the steel. Katrina hardly knew how she came to the seat at his side.

"I do not like you, said she," angrily. "Pray let me go away."

"No ; I wish to converse with you."

"Of what ?"

"Of the young man who visits you. I do not like him."

"I do not care whether you do or not," said Katrina.

The stranger smiled.

"Listen, my child," said he. "Are you not tired of this dull existence ?"

"I do not understand you, sir."

"This life of monotony—these dragging days," pursued the man. "Do you not sicken of them ? Would you not better your lot ?"

"I am very well pleased with my lot," said she, tartly.

"Because you know of no better, my simple child. There is one, more worthy of beauty such as yours—one to which I could lead you. What do you say, Katrina ? Would you not like to share my fortune and name ?"

"No!" with most unmistakeable emphasis.

"I will love you—I will do everything to make you happy. Come with me, Katrina. Shake off this vulgar inn life, and I will make you the queen of a brilliant circle."

There was something earnest and strange in the voice of the stranger; but Katrina now hated his very music.

"You said you were old enough to be my father," she said, reproachfully.

"But not too old to be a lover, my pretty maid," said the other, with a laugh, and again he sought to prove the sincerity of his regard by a second kiss upon the cheek; but the maiden repulsed him with vigour, and, as he persisted, struck him a stinging box on the ear. A gleam of anger leaped into his cheek, but it was gone again as quickly as it came.

Laughing again, he arose and approached her—for she had risen indignantly to her feet. But the sound of Gottlieb's return induced the stranger to resume his seat, and merely to say :—

"Please bring me some more beer, Katrina."

She meekly did so, for her anger was gone; and then her father entered with the new bridle, and signified to the gentleman that his horse was ready. So Whipple finished his beer, took the new bridle, and quitted the bar-room. In a moment, they heard the clatter of his horse's hoofs.

Then Katrina fell to crying very heartily, and told her father everything. Gottlieb's honest face grew darker as she spoke. But he said nothing. He merely went to the counter, took from its place and commenced loading the old blunderbuss.

"Oh father! what are you going to do?" cried Katrina, terrified.

"Nutting, my tear, nutting," said the old man, quietly, "only preparing for de foes, if we bes attacked."

In the meantime, young Wilder, after quitting General Washington's presence, made all haste to reach his mother's house, which was situated far up Manhattan Island, at a

point on the East River side, somewhere in the vicinity of the present junction of Seventy-ninth Street with Third Avenue. Although the arable portions of the island, above the city, were then taken up as market gardens, there were large uncultivated and solitary tracts—forest, swamp, and rocky slopes—which appeared as wild as they must have done when Hendrik Hudson sailed slowly up the stream with the adventurous flag of the Netherlands fluttering to the breeze.

At the edge of a thick forest, which extended in almost unbroken gloom from the line of Third Avenue to the East River, was the widow Wilder's cottage; and very pleasant and cheerful it appeared there, with the dark sweep of the woodlands in the rear, with its red roof and prim gables, and the sunny vegetable-garden which surrounded it.

Joe, obtaining a "lift" from a Government waggon on the road, reached his mother's garden-gate in good season. She was a hale, vigorous old lady, who greeted her son with a kiss, as he entered the domicile with a buoyant step.

"Good fortune, mother! What do you think?"

"You must have received your lieutenancy, Joe. That's it!" she replied.

"No I haven't."

"What then?"

"I'm to win a captaincy this very night. But, the best of the luck is, that I have seen General Washington. I have grasped his hand. I have drank wine with him. Huzza!"

"Not possible, my boy!"

"Yes! and he toasted me—he drank my health!"

"Now, Joe, you're joking. No? Well, tell me what the General said. Do tell me, dear boy."

"Here's to your safe return—and to pretty Katrina! How is that?"

"Glorious! My boy is rising in the world. But," continued the widow, with sudden anxiety in her voice, "but why drink to 'your safe return?' Where are you going, Joe?"

"Can't tell, mother. Secret, you know—must be kept. I'll tell you when I come back."

He kissed her gaily, and his tone was so light and easy that the old lady's anxiety quickly gave place to a pleasant pride for the honour which had come upon her house. And her son then went upstairs to make his preparations.

In doing this, Joe was very circumspect. His first measure was to change his dress for a rude fisherman's garb, which he had frequently worn before the war. He then put on his belt, placed two pistols—which he examined carefully to see that they were loaded and primed—and a hunting-knife in their several sheaths—his long pea-jacket completely concealing them.

He then sat down and wrote a little note to his mother, sealed it, and left it on a spot where he knew it was her custom to visit every few days. In this note he mentioned the object and danger of his mission, intending that she should know his fate, in case of accident. For the young man was not without his misgivings. He had put on an air of cheerfulness for his mother's sake. Nevertheless, he was by no means despondent. He was simply a sensible fellow, who made it a point to look at both sides of a thing, and, if the dark was in excess of the bright, to take his precautions accordingly.

Having finished his preparations upstairs, he went below, and got his mother to fill him a haversack with sandwiches. And, while she was making them, he lay down upon a lounge in the comfortable sitting-room, and fell fast asleep.

It was almost dark when he awoke, and he sprang to his feet, refreshed and alert. Hastily swallowing his supper, which already awaited him, he slung his haversack over his shoulder, embraced his mother, and left the house by the back door. Then going to a little stable, which stood a short distance in the rear of the cottage, he took therefrom a pair of long, slender, beautifully-made oars, threw them over his shoulder, taking a narrow path which wound in a north-easterly direction through the forest.

There was a lingering of twilight in the open country, but Joe seemed to enter a sudden realm of midnight, so dense were the woods into which the path soon led him. But he knew his bearings perfectly, and kept straight on, with no sound but his own footsteps. As he approached the river, however, he heard voices, and instinctively slackened his pace and proceeded on tiptoe. The voices momentarily grew louder as he approached, until they became distinctly audible. Presently, he perceived the outlines of the speakers. They were standing in an open glade, where there was light enough to distinguish their forms. Joe crept close up where he might observe and hear what was said. One of the forms was that of a man he knew—a man in a riding-habit, with the spurs at his heels, and a heavy whip in his hand, with the butt of which he was gesticulating earnestly to his comrade, who was a person of humbler appearance, but well armed and powerful withal. With the former of these men we are already acquainted. It was Gilbert Whipple. Joe had long suspected that he was a traitor, and therefore pricked up his ears to catch every sound.

“You must go within an hour,” said Whipple. “Be sure and make no delay.”

“I will make a sure thing of it, Mr. Whipple. But the British patrol the whole lower bay. How am I to pass them.”

“By giving the countersign, which is this: ‘The King’s cause prospers.’ This will let you pass everything. Then you are to land on Staten Island, just this side of the Narrows. I have already given you directions how to find the old stone house, after you get there.”

“Very good, sir. I understand that I am merely to make preparations for her reception to-morrow night. You are not ready to run off the little baggage till then, and I shall—”

“Of whom do you speak, sir!” exclaimed the other, his voice rising with anger.

“Of the little Dutch damsel, Katrina. (Joe almost started from his hiding-place at the mention of this name.)

"I beg pardon," continued the man, "I meant no disrespect."

"Take care of your tongue, my lad, or it may give you trouble. The person whom I make my wife is a lady. But I have no time to quarrel now. You understand everything. Is your boat close at hand?"

"She lies in the water right at the end of the path."

"Very good. Make your preparations immediately, and do not fail to start before nine o'clock."

"Never fear me, sir."

And the man left the little glade, and struck through the wood in a northerly direction, probably intending to seek his home before starting upon his mission.

The Tory remained in the glade, apparently lost in thought. Joe was full of apprehension and rage at what he had heard. He knew Whipple to be a dangerous and powerful man, but he was totally unprepared to find him the unprincipled villain which his own words had betrayed him to be. Joe softly put down his oars, and relieved himself of his haversack, drew a pistol from his belt, and prepared to attack his foe. Then he paused in the midst of his anger. He dared not, could not, shoot the man from his ambush. His noble nature revolted from such a deed. He must give his foeman warning, and fight him upon a fair field, when victory was by no means certain, for Whipple was the best pistol-shot on the island, and a man of prodigious muscular power besides. Under other circumstances than those in which he now found himself, such considerations as those last mentioned would never have crossed his mind for an instant. He would have entered upon the contest with the confidence of his vigorous, fearless youth, and with all the power of his impetuous nature. But now he was hampered by a weighty consideration—his duty. General Washington had confided to him an important trust. Had he a right to hazard it? Should even his most cherished feelings induce him to risk the safety of that trust? While he thus deliberated with himself, his unconscious enemy strode off.

When his foeman was really out of his reach, Wilder sat down in the little glade, and so great was his emotion, that he with difficulty restrained his tears. His breast had been the theatre of a painful conflict between opposing duties—his duty to Katrina and his duty to his country. If the latter had at last triumphed, it was at the expense of a struggle which left him irresolute and feeble. He was full of forebodings. If he should be captured, what would become of Katrina? He shuddered at the thought of her falling into the power of the villain who was plotting her abduction. And there was not even time to give warning to old Gotlieb. If he could have done that, he would have departed with a lighter heart. But he was already tardy; he should have been half way down the river by this time. At length he sprang to his feet with a fierce impulse.

“By heaven!” he exclaimed, “this discovery which I have made must have been providential. It was meant to spur me onward in the present undertaking. Success was barely possible before; now I must not—cannot fail.”

He again took up his oars and haversack, and proceeded toward the river with a more determined step than ever. One satisfaction, at least, was the countersign, which he had been so fortunate as to overhear.

He was not long now in reaching the place where his boat was moored. Arriving there, he looked around in hopes of discovering the boat which Whipple's minion had spoken of, and was not long in finding her snugly hid away up among the long grass and stunted willows growing at the water's edge.

“I wonder if she's seaworthy,” muttered the youth to himself, at the same time drawing the light craft upon the shore and turning her bottom up.

He then drew his heavy hunting-knife, and began cutting a hole through her with all speed. Having succeeded in making quite a respectable breach in her bottom, he stuffed the aperture full of the long grass, which he plucked and twisted in large knots for the purpose. Having made it

temporarily water-tight, he again set her afloat just as he had found her. He then threw his haversack and oars into his own boat, got in himself, and shoved off. Several strokes of the well-handled blades, and he was far out in the stream. There he paused ; for he saw a man emerge from the wood, and, judging that it must be the proprietor of the boat which he had manipulated, he wished to see the result.

The man got in his boat, pushed off, and was soon pulling down the river after Joe at a lively speed. Joe kept ahead of him, watching expectantly. A stiff breeze blew up the river, and the water was rough. Presently Joe had the satisfaction of seeing the man turn, heard him curse, and then saw him pull off his jacket and stuff it into the hole. This done, he steered for the shore at once.

"I think his voyage to Staten Island is spoiled for this night at any rate," muttered Joe, and he bent with vigour to his oars.

The Americans patrolled the rivers and the upper portion of the bay. The spy had been provided with a password for this emergency, and, though frequently interrupted in his voyage, he was soon on the open bay, beyond Governor's Island, with an apparently free passage down.

He then drew in one oar, and seating himself in the stern, used the other after the manner of a skull ; for he wished to see where he was going.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TORIES IN COUNCIL.

ON leaving the wood, where he had given his instructions to his assistant, Gilbert Whipple did not take a homeward direction, but resumed his saddle, and set out, at a hard gallop, for the north. In fifteen minutes he was at Harlem, where he stabled his steed, and proceeded to the river's edge, with the air of a man who was on the look-out for a signal. There were but few houses in Harlem at that period, and the shores of the river, especially that portion of them in the

vicinity of our present High-Bridge, were exceedingly wild and desolate in appearance.

He looked in vain across the water for the signal, which he seemed to be expecting, and then made his way up the shore, now and then casting his glance anxiously to the opposite side. Presently he reached that portion of the river-bank where it becomes precipitous, and continued his way with much more difficulty than before, and with ill-concealed dissatisfaction. But his ill-humour was presently dispelled; for when he had reached a high portion of the bank, he saw a little gleam of light shoot up in the gloom of the opposite shore, and then vanish away.

He halted and looked again. The signal was repeated. Apparently satisfied, he hastened down the steep bank to the water's edge. Bending low, he blew a small whistle, and looked over the water, as if in confident awaiting. Soon a little boat shot out into the stream from the opposite bank, and rapidly approached him. It contained only one oarsman, but he was a good one.

When the boat arrived within a few yards of the bank, the oarsman suddenly laid upon his oars, and propounded the following question, in a low but distinct tone :—

“ Who rules the land ? ”

“ The king,” was the cautious reply.

“ What is he worth ? ”

“ Dying for.”

The oarsman appeared satisfied, and backed the stern of his light craft against the shore. Whipple stepped into it without a word, and they glided out upon the starlit stream, toward the opposite shore, which was soon reached. The passenger then stepped from the boat, dropped a piece of money into the boatman's hand, and disappeared among the dense timber with which the land was clothed. That side of the river was rocky, and Whipple had considerable difficulty in making his way up the steep and wooded bank.

You would not have supposed there was a human habitation within a hundred miles of the place, it appeared so

wild and solitary. But the Tory had not gone a dozen rods before he came in sight of a rude but substantial building of stone, located on the summit of the ridge, in the centre of a pleasant little wold, or open glade, although so thoroughly belted round by timber as to be completely hid from view, even from the high ground of the opposite shore.

It was a two-storey building, large, apparently commodious, and with an air of affluence in the excellence of its outside belongings—the shutters (which were closed) being heavy and well made, and the roof, a handsome sloping affair, of substantial slate. Everything was silent about the place, and not a gleam of light discernible. The gruff growl of a watch-dog, and the unpleasant rattling of a chain, informed the approaching Tory that caution was necessary.

It is an uncomfortable sensation of a dark night, at all times—that ominous rattling of a watch-dog's chain, as you are blundering over unfamiliar ways, toward a strange habitation. Whipple liked it so little, that, before proceeding farther, he paused and looked about for a club of some sort, while the object of his apprehension gave utterance to loud barks.

The door of the mansion opened ; some one stepped out, and the low tones of a man's voice were heard quieting the dog. The man, who had issued from the house, however, motioned him off when within a few paces, and questioned him, much in the same manner as the boatman had already done :—

“ Who wins the fight ? ”

“ God and the right.”

“ The countersign give.”

“ *Qui vive !* ”

“ Pass in, sir,” said the man, and Whipple entered the hall, which was as dark as the tomb.

The man followed, closing the door, when the darkness of the hall became impenetrable.

“ What is the meaning of this ? ” asked Whipple, angrily ;
 “ are not our friends arrived ? ”

"Yes, sir. But it is necessary to be thus cautious," was the reply. "Pray have a moment's patience, sir. There is no fear of stumbling. Here are the stairs. Follow me, and you will soon have light."

Groping forward, Whipple reached the top of the staircase, when his guide suddenly threw open a door. The Tory started back, and covered his eyes, for the glare of light which rushed through the opening was dazzling in the extreme.

He heard a number of voices in the chamber, and after gradually encountering the glare until it ceased to pain him, he entered the apartment, the door being immediately closed behind him.

Had he been a stranger to the mansion, he would probably have given utterance to an exclamation of astonishment as he entered the chamber. It seemed almost like enchantment that such a gorgeous, glittering, and by no means silent, scene should be inclosed within the four walls whose exterior had been so profoundly gloomy and lifeless.

It was a large, high-roofed room, magnificently decorated, and most brilliantly illuminated by a costly candelabrum, which hung from the centre of the ceiling. The windows and shutters were scrupulously closed. The former were superbly gilded, and curtained with drooping blue damask of the most costly description. The ceiling was frescoed with enchanting and voluptuous images, and thickly strewn with gilded stars; while the walls were of a light, bright azure, relieved at intervals by pilasters of white and gold. Between the pilasters, as well as between the windows, were hung paintings, representing landscapes of a rich and tropical character, and surrounded by frames of the most showy and costly kind.

In the centre of this magnificent apartment was standing a long table, whereon was heaped a feast in keeping with the surrounding splendour, and there were several gentlemen and ladies doing it ample justice. The poverty of America was extreme at this time, which made it a matter of conjec-

ture as to the origin of all this splendour ; for the costumes of the guests were as rich and brilliant as anything else, and the cost of the banquet alone must have been considerable.

A welcome from many voices greeted Gilbert Whipple as he entered ; but the gentleman who had the head of the board, and who appeared to be the host, quickly arose from his seat, and advanced toward the new-comer, with extended hand :—

“A thousand welcomes, my dear Whipple, to our humble fare !” he exclaimed, as he shook his hand and led him to a seat at the table next his own.

The new-comer, evidently, had been a guest at the house before, for he soon made himself at his ease with every one, and especially with the excellent cheer, which the entertainer had affectedly denominated “ humble fare.”

The party was composed of eight persons, besides Whipple, and the striking appearance of some of them deserves more than a cursory glance.

The owner of this princely abode—whom we have already briefly introduced as “the host”—was an Englishman by birth, but long a resident in America, and one of the most powerful and influential allies of the Royal authority in the land. His existence is an historical fact, but, for several reasons, we will give him the fictitious name of Rupert Delaney. He was probably fifty years of age. His deportment was commanding, and even noble. His face had that bright, slightly rubicund expression so plainly indicative of a life of ease and luxury, with placid, good-humoured features, closely shaven, and the silver of time beginning to streak his hair, which was devoid of powder, then requisite to the full-dress costume. This gentleman was a man of enormous wealth—chiefly accumulated in the slave-trade—and, just before the inception of actual hostilities, he had retired from business to the mansion wherein we now find him, and which he had fitted up, interiorly, regardless of expense ; while, at the same time,

he had made the extremity of plainness his study in the exterior appointments of the house—probably with the purpose of attracting as little attention as possible from the American authorities, to whom he was partially known as a loyalist. Here he was enabled to entertain his friends, and enjoy, himself, the luxury to which his wealth had accustomed him, in a suitably private style.

A handsome lady of middle age, seated at the other extremity of the board, was Mrs. Delaney, wife of the host. She was attired with extraordinary elegance, and her hair was elaborately dressed and powdered. They had no children; hence the lady of that wealthy household had little else to think of save her personal appearance.

There were present two other ladies, young and very stylish in appearance, who had come from the South within the last few days, as fugitive Tories, and were guests of Delaney. Nothing was very noticeable in their appearance, save that they were attired in the height of the fashion, and with unusual elegance, as, indeed, were the remainder of the party—four gentlemen, of whom but one is of sufficient importance to demand notice. He was scarcely twenty-five and of extraordinary personal beauty. Of medium height, but with finely-knit frame, he had a Spanish look in his dark, handsome face, which was well relieved by the mass of powdered hair, surmounting and clustering round it. He was dressed in the naval garb of a British officer, and wore a small ivory-handled pistol in his belt, which was not considered inappropriate to the exigencies of the times. This was Guy Madden, a midshipman of the British ship-of-war *Arethusa*, which was at that time lying in the Long Island sound, at the junction of the East River. He was on her deck not three hours before his introduction that evening to the mansion, and it was not without extreme peril that he had made the passage of the East and Harlem rivers to enjoy the entertainment of Delaney.

Now, there would be little interest in recording any of the conversation which took place among this coterie of Tories, if

they were all Tories. But one of the young ladies whom we have so cursorily described—a Miss Wainwright, of Norfolk, Virginia—possessed a little of the liberty-loving enthusiasm in her loyalist composition, and, although she affected to believe, perhaps really believed, in the cause of the King, whenever anything specially severe was said against the rebels, you might see a little blush of native pride bridle up into her cheek, and her pretty lip tremble as if about to retort. This was generally suppressed, however, when the scathing words fell from young Madden's lips; nevertheless, now and then the American spirit would vindicate itself in a passionate outburst.

"I think you are too severe, sir," she said, in reply to some jeering partisan remarks which Whipple had just uttered. "The rebels are not without many provocations to their insurrection. They have suffered much—contumely, contempt, everything. I think they should all be borne—I think the authority of the King is sacred—but, do not overlook the provocations which have impelled the Americans to rebellion. Blame, if you will, but do not heap the blame!"

"Miss Wainwright is very much American in her sympathies," said Whipple, with a smile, in which there was a shadow of a sneer.

"It is because I was born in America," retorted the lady. "I love my country, whatsoever it be."

"I love the sentiment—it is noble!" said Guy Madden, bowing to her. "I would love my country—I would fight for it, if that country was a desert or a snowy waste. For my part, I am an Englishman—I am full of the natural prejudices belonging to my country, and would die for her. But, before God, if I was born in America, it would be otherwise."

An expression of displeasure appeared upon the countenances of the rest of the company—with the exception of Miss Wainwright's—at this declaration.

"What do you mean, Guy?" asked Delaney. "You surely cannot pretend to say that if you were an American—"

"I would fight for America," exclaimed the young man with heat. "What is a country worth, if it is not worth dying for? I love Albion because I cannot help it. It would be the same if my lot had been cast on this side of the ocean."

"Bravo!" cried Miss Wainwright, clapping her hands to the evident disgust of her young lady friend, who, from her startled demeanour, must have been born in England.

"I do not like these sentiments," said Gilbert Whipple. "A man should love his Sovereign under all circumstances. King George is as much the monarch of America as of England."

"Then should not the Americans have equal rights with the Englishmen?" asked Miss Wainwright.

"Certainly. And do they not?"

"Not at all."

"In what way?"

"Why are they not allowed a representation in Parliament?" said the lady. "Englishmen have this privilege. If America is the same as England, in your sense, why should they be taxed equally with Albion, if they have not equal representation?"

"Bravo! bravely argued!" cried the midshipman with a laugh.

"They should not have equal privileges because they are colonies," said Whipple.

"I agree with you, sir, perfectly," said Mr. Delaney and the other four gentlemen signified approval by their demeanour.

"The gentleman has ceased to argue," said the lady, with a curling lip. "I presented him with a fair question; he replies in the cant of partisan feeling."

"I do not," exclaimed Whipple, almost angrily. "I gave you a fair answer."

Guy Madden was sitting next to Whipple; he whispered:

"Have a care, my friend! The person to whom you speak is a lady."

Whipple flushed up angrily, but subdued his vexation almost as soon as it appeared.

"To change the subject," said he, "how goes the war? What are our prospects, midshipman?"

"Everything we could wish for, I think," said Madden. He now spoke with all the zeal of a sailor in the British cause. "The battle which is to decide the fate of your city of Manhattan is on the threshold of commencement. There can be no doubt of the result."

"Hardly any," said Whipple. "But have you no apprehensions of Washington?"

"I'm a Tory," said Miss Wainwright, "but I'm a believer in Washington's abilities. He is a glorious soldier."

"My opinion of General Washington," said the host, "is very much exalted. He is a rebel—a man of excellent education, if you will, but on that very account so much the more culpable for being a rebel to the Government."

"I rather agree with Miss Wainwright than with you," said Midshipman Madden. "I cannot understand, from the standpoint which I occupy as an Englishman, how a man like George Washington—as well as many other of the rebel leaders—can bring themselves to this error of disloyalty. Nevertheless, it is not in the province of a man of my few years to criticise the conduct of an intellect such as is possessed by men so much my superiors as are these gentlemen. They unquestionably believe that what they do is for the best. Miss Wainwright says that he is a 'glorious general.' I concur in this view. I can appreciate the man, though his conviction is against my own."

The host look displeased at hearing these sentiments. Whipple replied, with considerable irony in his tones:—

"My dear fellow, you do not talk as I love to hear Englishmen talk. There is one thing about General Washington, and about the class of Americans of which he is the exponent: he is a traitor. He fights his King. That is enough for me. The crime is without exculpation. It is treason. Every loyalist should fight against him."

"Why does not Mr. Whipple do so, then?" exclaimed the British midshipman. "I fight against him. So do most Englishmen. Why does not Mr. Whipple do the same?"

"I do so—I fight for my King, if I do it in an indirect way," was the reply. "My position—my wealth is employed against his enemies."

"But not your hand. You do not risk the chance of even a random bullet," said the midshipman. "If your belief is genuine, you should certainly fight for it."

Whipple grew very angry for a moment, but he was really on good terms with the officer, and he laughed off his own delinquency to the cause in a light way.

And now the night grew late, and the ladies retired. The gentlemen remained with their wine and their politics until a late hour. Whipple then proposed to Madden that he should exchange his uniform for a civilian's dress, and accompany him to his own house, where they would finish the night together, and he (Madden) could return to his ship on the following day. The invitation was accepted, and after bidding farewell to their genial host, they departed on their way to the city.

This scene will illustrate, in a measure, the characteristics of the time, as well as the drift of generous opinions, which, on rare occasions, imbued the minds of the British and their Tory allies.

CHAPTER V.

DANGEROUS GROUND.

OWING to the mode of navigation which he had adopted, Joe Wilder proceeded but slowly down the bay. Besides, even this much of his voyage was not unattended by danger. The water was very rough, and it required the utmost skill to keep his little craft from filling.

The night was beautiful, with scarcely a cloud. The camp-fires of the American camp—the right wing of which rested on the bay, just beyond Governor's Island—were burning

brightly, and the hum of the soldiers, at their evening meal, came over the waters to the ear of the lonely boatman. Far down the bay, to the left of the Narrows, he could also see the twinkle of the British camp, with a glimmer here and there on the Staten Island side, for some of the English troops still remained there.

He kept on his way, taking the centre of the bay as nearly as possible, as the route least likely to be interrupted by the patrolling boats. He began to flatter himself that he was about to escape them altogether, when his quick ear caught the sound of oars in their row-locks, and presently he saw a six-oared pinnace making towards him, but at a considerable distance. Boldness was his only cue, so he pushed forward.

"What boat is that?" was sung out from the bow of the pinnace.

"It's no difference to you, so long as 'The King's cause prospers,'" replied our hero, as cool as a cucumber.

"All right! Round to, lads!" said the Britisher; and, in a few moments, her six long sweeps had carried the pinnace far away.

"Good for a beginning," chuckled the young man. "What in the deuce would I have done if I hadn't met those fellows in the forest."

Still cautious, he kept on his way. He was now approaching the Narrows, and not far from the point at which he had decided to land. This was a small promontory, a short distance from where you now turn in between Fort Lafayette and the Long Island beach. But he saw that this promontory was occupied—a camp-fire was burning at its extremity—and he was obliged to alter his plan. Quick at a fresh expedient when an old one failed, Joe kept on straight through the Narrows, though the sea ran high, and presently rounded into the little bay which is formed between Coney Island and the main shore of Long Island, just outside the present Fort Lafayette. A landing here, he was confident, would bring him altogether in the rear of the British position.

He soon made the desired landing, after encountering and

passing several more patrolling boats, and making his skiff secure in a little jungle of reeds and stunted trees, proceeded cautiously inland, with his faculties strained to their utmost capacity.

A perfect solitude seemed to reign over the land. Fortunately for the spy, the nature of the country was broken and woody, with here and there a salt marsh, covered with tall reeds, which also afforded an excellent concealment.

Joe had a clear head as well as a stout heart. Whenever he concocted a plan, he did it systematically. He always had something to determine first ; and this he always satisfied himself upon before proceeding to the next proposition. His first desideratum in the present instance was this : the British Army countersign. This was indispensable, as a preliminary to the accomplishment of his dangerous mission ; and he racked his brains to obtain a means to this end. At length he decided that the only way was to steal upon some sentinel, and lie in wait, in hopes that some officer would come along, from whom he could catch the precious words.

Presently he heard the sing-song calls and reponses of the enemy's pickets, which apprised him that he must exercise even greater caution than heretofore. He had been much on the frontier, and was as familiar with woodcraft as a born backwoodsman. Flinging himself down, he proceeded on all fours towards the sentry whose voice had sounded nearest. Fortunately, he found in this soldier a stupid Hessian, posted in a small opening in the thicket. He approached as nearly as safety would permit, and lay in wait.

There was no moonlight yet, but the stars were unusually bright, and he could plainly discern every motion of the sentinel, who kept up a sleepy pace to and fro, every now and then singing out his "All's well!" to the next picket, who was probably a furlong away.

Joe had not long to wait before an officer, on his rounds, came to the picket, and gave the countersign, but in a voice so low that only the sentry could hear it. Chagrined at his ill-success, he resolved to approach the sentry nearer even

at some risk ; and, as soon as the officer had departed, he cautiously crawled forward, keeping as deeply within the shadow of the wood as was possible. Once he was almost discovered. He overturned a rattling branch of dead holly, and the sentry wheeled, with a start, his hand upon the trigger of his firelock. But the scout sunk into the grass as noiselessly as a serpent, and, after a moment of breathless suspense, the German laughed at himself, and continued his tramp.

Exercising still greater caution, calculating every movement with the utmost precision, Joe continued to crawl along until he reached a double tree, almost within touching distance of the sentry. Behind this admirable screen he ensconced himself, and waited a long time with bated breath. Even then he did not have the chance of obtaining his end through the agency of this individual, who was, in the course of an hour, relieved by another sentry. The new man was also a Hessian, and Joe studied him well—the moonlight, which now began to strike the glade as the moon arose above the trees, affording an ample opportunity for observation. He was a younger, stronger, readier chap than his predecessor, and Joe apprehended trouble.

After another long hour of suspense, the officer of the guard again came round, and Joe had, this time, the infinite satisfaction of hearing the countersign, "Blenheim," fall from his lips.

The next consideration was to be able to appear as a British soldier. This was more difficult of accomplishment ; for it was evident that he must first obtain a uniform. There was, therefore, something critical in the examination to which the unconscious sentry was subjected by the spy. Evidently he was studying the German's figure to see if his clothes would be a good fit for a Yankee. Having satisfied himself on this point, Joe unbuttoned his pea-jacket, and drew his shining hunting-knife from its sheath.

He returned it to his belt, however, and paused thoughtfully. It was necessary for the success of his plan that this

man should die ; and yet the young American hesitated. He could not strike a secret blow, in howsoever noble a cause -- it was impossible. Nevertheless, he had to make up his mind quickly, and this he did.

"I will snatch his musket away," he thought, "and if he is noiseless, I will give him a fair chance. That is the best I can do."

The sentry, who kept up his walk continually, was, at the half of every round, with his back to the trees. Noting his chance when the Hessian's back was turned, he glided from his covert, and followed him as noiselessly as his own shadow. Just as the soldier turned in his beat, he felt his musket torn from him, and, wheeling suddenly in his tracks, beheld the scout, with his hand upon his knife.

Before the sentry could utter a cry, the hand of his enemy was upon his throat. The fellow was a man of courage and presence of mind. His musket gone, he was unarmed ; but, he grappled and fought hard. Wilder had met a man who was more than his match in physical power ; but the knife, which he held in his grasp, gave him the advantage. There was a fierce struggle, and then he got it home, straight to the heart of the hireling, who fell back, dead without uttering a groan.

Wilder was forced to acknowledge to himself that it was not a fair fight. But the odds which he staked were enormous, and he had little time in which to moralize. Pale from the death-struggle, he drew the lifeless body of the soldier far into the shadow of the dense forest, and commenced to divest him of his clothing and to attire himself in the same. This task was soon completed, and having hidden the body securely and deftly beneath a pile of old brushwood and brambles, he took the fallen musket, and kept up the regular round of the sentry, resolved to wait until a change of guard. In less than an hour, the officer of the guard came around, and relieved him, ordering him to camp.

Joe followed obediently. The officer was very talkative, which made discovery imminent, for although the disguised

sentry answered as few questions as possible, and then in the best of his broken English, he was in great apprehension that the officer would make a discovery.

At length, as they arrived at an exceedingly lonely spot in the forest, and just as Joe had made a reply to some question of the officer, the latter turned upon him suddenly, and glanced with hawk-eyes into his face.

"You're a spy !" cried the officer, unsheathing his sword.

"I am," said Wilder, desperately, and, quick as lightning, he drew his dagger from its sheath.

They closed with a shock, and rolled over on the ground together, the officer's head striking a boulder so heavily as to completely stun him.

"There's but one way," muttered Joe to himself, as he rose upon his knees. "I wish there was another, but there isn't." He let drive with his knife, and the Hessian captain was a dead man.

All this may seem a cruel recital, but we must remember what was at stake. If the scout had been taken, he would have been hung. Every chance had to be weighed with blood in one side of the balance. There was neither time nor tide for magnanimous scruples. To succeed was the soldier's duty.

Having rid himself of this enemy, our spy's next care was to again make an alteration in his costume. For he rightly judged that, as an officer, he would have much larger margin for action than as a soldier. So he discarded his own coat and hat for that of the dead German, possessed himself of the sash and sword, and proceeded on his way more confident than ever. It seemed to him that he had waded his way in blood to this point, so quickly successive had been these adventures ; but the thought of the stake confirmed his courage and decision to accomplish all or die.

Without hesitation he approached the next sentry.

"Who goes there ?"

"A friend."

"Approach, and give the countersign."

He went nearer, and whispered "Blenheim," which did not fail to satisfy the picket.

"What do you see about here now?" inquired the officer, in excessively broken English.

"Nutting petic'lar," said the Hessian, eyeing him sharply. "De captain is accustomed to speak to his own soldiers in de German language," he continued.

"Dat ish true," said Joe; "but we're Englishmen, now: vy not tries to learn de language, eh?"

"I likes de ole coountry talk, jis' de zame," responded the other.

"Ah, goot! Shust pe a Sharman as mooch as you blease. Vare Sheneral De Heister moved his tent to, does you t'inks?"

"Vy, it's only von mile from here, in von straidt line jis de vay you stand."

"Vat! so near as dat! Vell, I moos be goin'." And the *pseudo*-officer sauntered off through the woods.

One more sentry was encountered and got rid of in the same way, when our hero found himself, to his great joy, in the vicinity of the tent of the Hessian commander.*

He approached what he supposed to be General De

General De Heister, the commander of the Hessian troops, was a man of great bravery and some lofty qualities. But, he was of a very irate disposition, and unreasonable at times: as the following anecdote—which we take from Upcott [vol. iv. 419]—will illustrate—

"After the battle of White Plains, the Provincial officers who were taken prisoners, being dispersed in different parts of the regular army, were occasionally asked to dine at the tables of our general officers. It happened, one day, that one of them dined with General De Heister, the Hessian General, who, as soon as the cloth was taken away, drank 'The King.' Some of the Provincials drank the toast; others drank their wine, and said nothing. At last, one, who had more plain dealing about him than the rest, refused drinking, giving it as a reason, with many apologies, 'that, if it had been a favourite toast with him, he would not then be in the situation he was at present.' This occasioned some confusion, and, in particular, brought on an altercation between him and the General, which in the end, terminated in the latter so far forgetting himself as to strike the former with his cane. This, no doubt, is nothing more than what is common in the German discipline, yet, though it may be thought advisable for us [the English] to want their assistance as soldiers, it is to be hoped British generals will reprobate such feelings and manners."

Heister's tent. Not a soul was visible, but a light was burning within. The adventurer moved noiselessly toward the tent. Peering cautiously beneath the canvas, he saw an officer busily writing at a little table in the centre.

This officer was a man of middle-age, dark complexion, and with a face denoting firmness of character. His fatigue-dress was of the loose German pattern, and the sword, which hung from a moveable hook in the canvas, was also of the heavy Belgian style, unlike those usually worn by British field-officers. If these evidences were insufficient, the end of a military trunk, presented toward the scout, with the name "De Heister" thereon, in German capitals, rendered it quite certain that he beheld the General of the Hessian forces.

As it soon became evident that no information was obtainable in this quarter, Joe returned to the shadow of the trees as noiselessly as he came. Thence he continued his progress, quite confident, from what he had been informed, that the next tent would be that of General Howe. In this he was correct. He soon came in the rear of a pavilion whose size and appearance left him no room for doubt as to the character of the occupant. A light also shone through this tent, and he could hear low voices conversing within, but a sturdy sentinel stalked up and down in the interval between it and the wood in which he lay concealed. This was a great obstacle. The night was drawing into the hours of morning, and the moments of darkness were incalculably precious to the daring scout; and yet, even if he should succeed in despatching the sentinel, it was impossible to do so without a scuffle, with imminent danger of alarming the occupants of the tent—which was scarcely a rod away from the beat of the guard. Joe studied his man carefully, and cautiously weighed the opposing chances of success and defeat in his mind. He finally came to the conclusion that the tent must be approached, and that the sentry must die. Having arrived at this determination, he prepared to act upon it immediately. Looking to his knife, he stole upon

the guard as closely as practicable, and then rushed upon him out of the darkness like a shadow.

It was a surprise for the Briton, quite complete, and the scout had him by the throat before a word could be uttered. The musket of the guard slipped from his hands, and rolled harmlessly upon the grass. But the fellow was as brave as a lion, and fought desperately, as his only chance. There was a silent, fierce, deadly struggle, but it was brief enough, for the knife did its fatal work quickly.

The dead man lay with his white features upturned to the moon. They were handsome and clear—evidently those of a gallant, generous spirit. A feeling of remorse entered young Wilder's breast as he gazed upon the form which he had robbed of life. He questioned himself—Have I acted a manly part? Was it a fair fight? Perhaps he has a mother, who will miss him at home, or a sister—a sweetheart. But, there was scant time for moralizing. The imminence of his own peril called him to the necessity of immediate action. Hastily dragging the corpse into the woods, he exchanged his heavy Hessian shako for the hat of the sentry, as well as his coat, and then—after concealing the body—hastened back, took up the fallen musket, and began to play sentinel with all his might. Scarcely had this change been effected, when he heard a step behind him, and wheeled quickly with presented gun. The intruder was General De Heister, on his way to General Howe's tent. Now we must not forget that Joe was unfamiliar with the countersign. "Blenheim," evidently, was for the German outposts, and not for the main camp. That countersign he was yet to learn, and he went at it the right way.

"Who goes there?"

"A friend."

"Advance, and give countersign."

"Blenheim."

Joe's musket was at his shoulder, with the hammer up, in an instant.

"If you advance another step, you're a dead man!"

"Pshaw! don't you know me? I was only trying your vigilance," said the officer, with a very slight German accent. "Here's your countersign." And he thereupon whispered "Malmesbury."

"Pass on!" said the sentry, in token of satisfaction; yet not without a tremour in his voice, for he did not know but that the General was "trying him" a second time.

But De Heister evidently was satisfied with his first experiment, for he bowed, and passed on, without another word.

The officer entered the tent and Joe slipped up behind it. Carefully laying aside his musket, he got into the trench, and peeped under the canvas. After some difficulty, he managed to get a fair view of the inside; but, before he did so, he had the satisfaction of hearing De Heister recounting, for the benefit of his fellow-officers, his adventure with their faithful and vigilant sentry, besides hearing the Commander-in-Chief say that he would see the fellow duly honoured in the morning.

"There's no use resisting fate," thought Joe. "I get promoted wherever I serve—the greater the danger the surer the honours."

He saw three persons in the tent—two besides De Heister. One of them he had seen before in Boston. It was Sir Henry Clinton, the second in command.

It was not easy to forget those genial, sensual features, which seemed so youthful, in contrast with the form upon which time and mental toil were making rapid inroads. He still was the fop in point of attire, which had prompted the Yankee lampoon, every stanza of which terminated:—

But Sir Harry keeps his neckcloth white,
So mention not his deeds;
For white is black and black is white,
But each the contrast needs.

The other officer whom the spy had never before seen he rightly conjectured to be none other than Sir William Howe.*

* Lord Viscount George Howe (the brother of Sir William), the eldest son of Sir E. Scrope, second Lord Viscount in Ireland, was a man of many noble qualities, and as much cherished in the memories of Americans as his brother was execrated. He arrived at Halifax in

He was a man of greater age than either of his companions, and with a physiognomy indicative of more ability. Likewise full in the face, with that hale ruddiness of cheek and nose which is seldom found in such perfection as in England. There was a piercing keenness in the dark eyes, so deeply set beneath their bushy brows, which bespoke at once a vigilant and valiant soul—although he had frequently been lampooned by the American satirists as a weak man.*

These officers were having an earnest conversation upon their plans and prospects, and although they spoke in that low tone of voice which men naturally assume when consulting upon affairs which are, at the same time, secret and important, not a single word did the eager hearing of the scout fail to catch and write upon his mind. He was not long in learning that the time decided upon for the attack was the day after the morrow—that is, at daylight on the morning of the 27th

the summer of 1757, having under his command 5,000 British troops, who had been despatched from England to assist in the expedition against the French. In the next year he was with Abercrombie at the renowned attack at Ticonderoga, and, at the first fire of the French, who were posted in the woods a short distance westward of the fort, he fell mortally wounded. "In him the soul of the army seemed to expire." His kindly disposition, bravery, and many virtues endeared him to the soldiers; and Massachusetts, as a "proof of her love and esteem for his gallantry and daring," erected a monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey. At the time of his death he was thirty-three years of age.

* A correspondent, writing to *Brasher's Journal*, in 1777, commented severely upon the British in what he called a "new catechism," from which we extract the following:—

"To whom has the British Court committed the conduct of the present war? To Lord and General Howe.

"Who are these gentlemen? They are the brothers of a Colonel Howe, who fought bravely by the side of the Americans in a former war, and fell in battle; who, by his amiable character, endeared himself to these people so much, that they lamented his fate with unfeigned sorrow, and erected, at their own expense, a costly monument to his memory. But these gentlemen, with unrelenting hearts and sacrilegious hands, have defiled their brother's monument with the blood of those whose affection reared it to his honour, and plunged their murderous weapons into bosoms glowing with love and esteem for their mother's son."

And again:—

"Who is the soggiest man in the world? Lord Howe.

"Who is the weakest? General Howe."

of August. Having acquired this and other information of vital importance, the scout dared not tarry longer in his present position. The day was beginning to break, and he yet had a difficult task before him.

However, congratulating himself upon his success thus far, and prone to think that the worst of his perilous mission was accomplished, he left the tent and its occupants undisturbed, and proceeded toward the forest, resolved to make his way into the American lines as fast as possible.

But with all Joe's shrewdness, there was one thing which he had not calculated upon : while he was so busily and—apparently—securely bottling and corking up information from behind General Howe's pavilion, he had been watched. And now, scarcely had he entered the wood, before he found himself in an ambuscade of a dozen or more British soldiers, who suddenly arose around him with levelled muskets, like so many phantoms. There was but one chance of escape—and that a slim one—but the desperate man seized it. Springing back from the timber, he ran like a deer across the moon-lighted open space toward the marsh, which he knew to be not many rods beyond the tent. If he could reach that quagmire, he was saved ; for he knew—and had traversed it often as a boy—a single, narrow, and intricate path, which would soon put him beyond reach of the enemy or the enemy's bullets. Crack ! crack ! went several guns, before he was a rod away. At first he felt a sharp, scorching pain, like a red-hot iron, graze his cheek. Then he felt a colder, but more agonising, pain in his left shoulder ; and he knew that he was badly wounded. The next moment the entire pack were upon him, with a shout of triumph ; but he turned at bay, and fought with his bayonet like a fiend. The foremost of his assailants went down from the bullet with which his piece was charged, and the next received his bayonet in his breast. But the next moment he was overpowered, covered with wounds, bleeding and prostrate, at the very door of General Howe's tent.

They dragged him within, before the officers, and uncere-

moniously propped him up against the centre-post of the tent.

"A spy, General," said a sergeant, the leader of the party. "Where did you discover him?" inquired General Howe.

"At the edge of the thicket, sir. We saw him looking under your tent, and listening to your conversation. A moment after, just as he was making off, we grabbed him. He has fought hard, but here he is."

"Listening at my tent! Is it possible?" ejaculated the officer. "What have you to say to this, fellow?" he continued, turning sharply upon poor Joe.

"The sergeant speaks the truth," said the latter, as cool as a cucumber; for he was sensible enough to perceive that the game was at last up.

"Take the man to the guard-house," said General Howe, quietly. "Guard him well. There is no need of hanging him before daylight."

With these words ringing uncomfortably in his ears, Joe was hustled off.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BLUNDERBUSS SPEAKS.

ON the early morning of that luckless day for Joe Wilder, the glimmer of a night lamp still shone in a chamber of the mansion of Gilbert Whipple. There was no need of its feeble flame, for the day was bright without; but the occupant of the room was fast asleep on a sofa, oblivious of beam or shadow. He must have kept late hours on the preceding night, for he had not troubled himself to cast off his clothing.

Upon a table, in the centre of the apartment, were standing some decanters and tumblers—some of the latter broken; and there were other evidences of a departed feast. Whipple must have been enjoying himself with some friends. The room itself was furnished with elegance—even luxuriously. The table, and chairs, and grand old bedstead, were of expensive wood and highly carved; the curtains were of heavy

damask ; the carpet was deeply tufted and brightly hued. In a word, the apartment was evidently the home of a man of expensive and voluptuous tastes.

At length a negro domestic entered to wake his master. The latter rolled to a sitting posture, and sleepily rubbed his eyes.

"What is it, Meph?"—short for Mephistophiles—growled the waker. "What do you mean by waking me so early?"

"Dere's a gemman downstairs. Been waitin' a long time—awful long time," answered the darkey.

"Gentleman! At this time in the morning? Bah! Well, send him up, whoever he is."

The servant vanished. In a few minutes the door again opened, and our aquatic acquaintance of the leaky boat made his appearance, with a rueful countenance.

"What brings you here?" exclaimed Whipple, angrily. "You can't possibly have accomplished my mission by this time."

"No ; you see—you see—the fact is—" stammered the other.

"What! Do you mean to say you didn't go?" in a voice of thunder.

"Yes, that's it, you see. But it wasn't my fault, captain. I hadn't more'n fairly got to sea when the all-firedest leak sprung in the yawl you ever see'd this side of a waterspout. I was fairly kivered in less'n a minute. The way I had to make for the beach was a caution. Then I come down to the quays and tried to hire another craft ; but the hour was late, and I couldn't. Then I tried to steal one, and almost got my scalp blowed off with a load of buckshot. So, at last, thinks I, I'll jist go round to Mr. Whipple's and tell him the whole story."

"But you should have taken precautions before," growled Whipple. "You told me you had an excellent boat."

"There warn't a better this side of Cape Cod," said the waterman, with retrospective pride. "She could beat any two-oared thing that ever swum the sea. But how on earth

is anything goin' to sail with a hole cut in her bottom big enough for you to ram your head through?"

"Cut! Who cut it?"

"Wal, you see, that's guess-work. But there's another chap—him that lives with his mother, up at the skirt of the wood—as had a craft moored near to mine; and I half believe he was the scamp; for he was standin' out in the stream, provisioned for a long v'yage, jist as I left port, and I thought I heerd him snicker when I sprung aleak. The hole was newly cut, and stuffed with grass, so as, jist as soon as I got well out, the stuffin' gave way and the salt water flew through higher'n a man's head. Blast him, if I ever get a grab on him, you'll hear more blue murder squealed than you ever heerd this side of the brimstone-pit. I half suspect, besides, that the rascal overheard our conversation in the wood."

"Impossible! His name?"

"Joe Wilder. I thought you know'd him."

"I should think I did," exclaimed the Tory. "And you think it was he? You are probably right. It is another mark against the young rascal."

"So, you see," exclaimed the luckless boatman, "I thought I'd jist come around and get further orders. For I s'pose, considerin' circumstances, we can't run the gal off this night, no how."

"Yes, we will, by heaven! The risk is greater, but it shall be done. Be sure to be on hand at midnight. Buy another boat, if necessary. Here is the money."

Saying this, the Tory counted some money into the boatman's hand.

"Now remember! Do not fail me!" was his parting injunction.

"Never fear, Mr. Whipple. I'm springy as hickory, and as true as steel." And the man went his way, still muttering vengeance on that "infernal scamp" who had scuttled "the pootiest craft this side of Cape Cod."

Left alone, the Tory paced the room for some moments in

profound meditation. He was aroused by the sound of a clear voice singing, across the way, and heard old Von Snooze taking down the shutters from the windows of the Golden Shark. He knew the sweet voice to be Katrina's, and, stepping to the window, threw open the blinds to gaze without.

Katrina was standing on the tavern-steps, her face rosy and beautiful in the fresh morning air. She would probably have gone in, if she had been aware of the burning gaze fixed upon her. Long did her admirer remain at the window, but, at length, Katrina being called, the Tory left his position, and, going to the table, drank a small glass of spirits, with a relish. Then, mending his toilette, he descended to his morning meal, at the summons of Mephistophiles, read the days bulletin, smoked a cigar, and then sauntered over to the Golden Shark, where his horse was kept.

He met the host at the door, and could not help noticing that there was a change in his demeanour. It was no longer the obsequious salutation of "Good morning, Mr. Vipple," but merely a surly straightening up of the head. Nevertheless, the Tory fancied he could afford to despise the moods of old Gotlieb, and perceiving Katrina in the bar-room, he entered, and, as usual, ordered the old man to have his horse got ready.

Gotlieb cast a suspicious glance at him as he left the room, but said nothing. Now, Gilbert Whipple had drank a great deal of wine on the previous night. He still felt the fumes of the goblet in his veins, and was, perhaps, a trifle less prudent and deferential than was his custom. No sooner had Gotlieb departed than he drew the shrinking form of Katrina to him and gave her a kiss. The maiden again struggled away from him, and the cavalier received a sound box on the ear for his pains.

"Don't be a prude, my little friend!" he exclaimed, angrily. "You may learn to treat me more civilly, by-and-bye."

"She's von lady, Mr. Vipple," said old Gotlieb, entering

the room—for he had not gone to the stable, but had heard and seen what had passed. “She’s not a prude, Mr. Vipple, but von innocent child. Vat for you makes so, eh? Vot you t’ink, ven you makes belief you wants me to get your horse, dat you may snatch von kiss from mine leetle girl.”

“Pooh!” said Whipple; “is a kiss more or less, particularly from one as old as I, going to harm Katrina?”

“Naw,” exclaimed the old man, angrily. “But, vat you makes? dat’s vat I vant to know: vot for you makes belief to my Katrina, eh?”

“Have a care what you say, you old fool,” said the Tory, haughtily. “The girl should be proud to have a gentleman salute her, as I have done.”

“Look you, Mr. Vipple, I wants to show you someding,” said the old man, more quietly than before.

With that he took down the old blunderbuss from the wall, and carefully examined the priming.

“Oh, father! what are you going to do?” exclaimed Katrina, surprised and terrified.

“Nutting to hurt any von, my child. I jist wants to show de shentleman somedings. Oblige me, Mr. Vipple, by stepping to dis vindow for one moment,” said Gotlieb, addressing his last sentence to the visitor.

The latter, with a smile at the cumbrous weapon, complied with the request, when Gotlieb pointed through the open window to a plain board fence at the back of the yard, at twenty or thirty steps from their position.

“You sees dat leetle plack spot in de middle of de vence, Mr. Vipple?”

“Yes,” said the Tory, still eyeing the wide-mouthed blunderbuss with humorous scorn.

“Vell, jist you vatch him von moment,” said Gotlieb, using both hands to draw back the rusty hammer of the weapon, and bringing the butt to his shoulder with a martial air.

Down came the hammer, and bang went the crazy weapon, almost knocking the stout marksman off his pins by the vigour

of its recoil. The sound of the bullets striking the fence somewhat resembled the emptying of a cartload of coarse gravel down a coarse sieve. When the smoke cleared away, the fence appeared as if perforated by a cannon-load of grape-shot.

"How many slugs were there in that blunderbuss?" exclaimed Whipple, in astonishment.

"Von quart, prezactly," was the cool rejoinder of the landlord of the Golden Shark; and he proceeded to reload the piece. "I jist wanted to show you, Mr. ipple, vot de ole goon could do, you know. I keeps her onder mine pillow, every night. I vish you von very good morning, Mr. Vipple. And I beliefs I don't vant to keep your horse any more times. Good morning, Mr. Vipple," continued Gotlieb; and the gentleman left the room, as he was requested.

Then Gotlieb finished reloading his gun, and returned it to its place on the wall; after which he walked calmly to the door, and exhibited himself on the stoop very complacently; for he was well satisfied with himself.

As for little Katrina, she sat down in a corner and shed a few tears, no doubt thinking that the lot of a landlord's daughter was a very miserable one.

CHAPTER VII.

GUY MADDEN'S MISSION.

THERE is still another episode in the drift of our main story, of which it is necessary to treat before resuming the unraveling of Joe Wilder's fate, and that episode is occasioned by the visit of the gay Guy Madden to New York.

The naval officer had another object than mere good fellowship for his Tory friend when he accompanied the latter in his return from the princely mansion of Delaney to the southern extremity of the island. He was within the American lines for a purpose similar to that which brought the luckless Joe Wilder into those of the British.

In furtherance of his scheme, the young officer, after having

passed the night at Whipple's, left his host in the deep slumber wherein we found him in our last chapter, and wandered through the streets of the town, which he was enabled to do in safety, under the disguise which he now wore. Nevertheless, his mission was not unattended with danger.

Suspicion might be aroused at any moment, and he could give but a poor account of himself if arrested. But he was hardy and brave, and was willing to take the consequences.

It was a market-day, and young Madden strayed through the throngs, listening in a careless way to all conversation touching upon the war, and now and then joining in where he could do so without exciting suspicion. He also moved along State-street, and looked with some curiosity at the building used as the American head-quarters. The desire to enter was strong, but prudence forbade. As he stood surveying the building, an officer threw open one of the upper windows, and gazed out upon the bay. Madden never before had seen this officer, but he unconsciously put his hand to his cap and saluted him with profound respect. The salute was acknowledged and returned with equal politeness.

"My friend," said Madden to a soldier, who was strolling past him, "will you be kind enough to tell me the name of the officer who appeared at that window a moment ago?"

The soldier looked at his interrogator in surprise.

"You must have come from far, not to know that officer," said he.

"I have just come from far in the interior," returned Madden. "I was struck with the noble appearance of the officer in question, and am curious to know his name."

"The person you inquire of is General George Washington," replied the soldier, passing down the street, as he spoke.

Madden had with difficulty suppressed an exclamation of surprise. Now he eyed the building with renewed curiosity. The window still was open, and the form of the General now and then came into view as he paced the interior of the apartment.

As Guy gazed upon that noble form, a dark thought entered his breast. Almost unconsciously, he put his hand into the bosom of his vest until it encountered the cold butt of a concealed pistol.

"I am a dead shot," he said to himself. "Before me, within easy range, is the ablest leader of my country's foes. I might shoot him dead, this instant."

Busied with such reflections as these, the young Briton paced up and down before the building, ever and anon casting a glance at the object of his thoughts. But a nobler instinct soon appeared in the expression of his features; he resolutely thrust back the weapon, which he had partially drawn from its concealment, cast one more glance of admiration at the commanding figure of the American chieftain, and strode away.

Having obtained all the intelligence he could by frequenting the taverns and markets, and gossiping when he obtained a chance, Madden found himself about noon in the vicinity of the Golden Shark tavern, and entered the tap-room to procure refreshment.

"What a different man from Mr. Whipple is this polite gentleman," thought little Katrina, as she served the stranger with the beer and cheese which he had ordered.

Old Gotlieb was sitting in his easy-chair, looking exceedingly complacent and happy—for hardly an hour had elapsed since he had given Gilbert Whipple the specimen of his marksmanship.

"Have you any fresh war news this morning, friend?"

The manner of the stranger was insinuating and pleasant, and Gotlieb condescended to be loquacious. After he had talked with Madden for about ten minutes, it seemed to him as if he had been pumped completely dry.

"You have a handsome sign for your tavern," said Madden, when it became tolerably evident that Gotlieb's stock of information was completely exhausted. "Might I inquire if there is any legend connected with the origin of your emblem?"

"A very vonderful story," said the landlord, eyeing the gilded monster of the sign-post with a pleased complacency.

"Oh, father, do tell it to the gentleman," said Katrina.

"I am sure he will be pleased to hear it."

"I shall be most happy to hear the legend," said Madden, smiling. "Suppose we have some more beer, to make the thing more social."

So Katrina brought them some more beer, and, when she had resumed her seat, her father commenced

THE LEGEND OF THE GOLDEN SHARK.

"In de virst blace," said he, "I vill call your attention to de sblendid goon vich you see susbended from de vall. Dat ploonderpuss ish *swei* hoondred years olt. She pelonged to mine forefader, who was an admiral in de Dootch navy, and vas a very goot man. He vas, likewise, a very prave man, indeed. He pought dat ploonderpuss in Amsterdam, ven he vas a yoong feller, shoultered her, and fought pravelly for de Brince of Orange. Aftervards, ven he vent into der navy, as von bast midshipman, he dook his goon mit him, and always kept her oonder his piller, ven he had von, and oonder his pare head ven he didn't got no piller. Vell, he vos such a goot man, and such a prave feller, dat dey makes him von admiral, and he vears a great teal of gold on his hat and coat, and takes von coat-of-arms, vich vas very nice, only he didn't know vat vas de pest ting to put on it. So he says: 'Vait till I do someting prave on de sea, and den I vill put on de coat-of-arms.' So, von day, ven he vas mit his ship on von long voyage, away off in der Pacific Ocean, a feller in de stern sung out: 'Mine Got, admiral, come and see vat a shark dere is oonder de stern!' So, de admiral he runs out dere, and shoost so soon as he gets dere, de feller vat sung out lie tumples over de board; and der admiral he sees von enormous shark, just de color of gold, vich immediately swallers up der feller, like von piece of pork and peans. 'Lower der poat!' cried der admiral; 'lower der poat, and fight mit der shark!' So, von whole lot of men and poys shumps in der

poat, and rows out to der shark, vich jist rolls over on der back and swallows der whole compoodle, vithout so much as having der stomach-ache. Den der admiral, in von great rage, pulls off mit his coat and his shoes, and grabs his sword mit his teet, and joomps overpoard. Der shark makes at him, but he swims around so sbry, dat de peast couldn't pite him von pit; ven at last, he sees his shance, und dives oonder der shark, and, mit von plow, rips open der shark's pelly, so dat der poat and der first feller all tumples out into der vater, alive and kickin'. But, you see, dey all tumples out oopside-down, because der shark had swallered dem py turning on his pack, and der admiral, he lets 'em out py ripping open de beast's stomach. Vell, dey all gets on poard der ship, once more, but der yellor shark, he goes down to der pottom. Den der admiral he swears von pig oat, and he says: 'Py my life, I vill put der golden shark on mine scootchen, ven I gets home vonce more!' And so he did. And dere's vere mine shark and mine ploonderpuss comes from. Der story is all true, every vord of it, mitout doubt!"

"He would be incredulous, indeed, who would doubt it!" cried the stranger, laughing merrily at the recital, the old man's solemn manner in telling it adding considerably to its humour.

A soldier now entered the tap-room and called for some beer. Madden was surprised and uneasy to recognise in him the same man whom he had questioned in regard to General Washington. His uneasiness was not diminished when he remarked that the soldier was studying him very closely, nor when the former, after paying for his beer, immediately departed with a hasty step.

As soon as he was gone, Madden turned to the landlord, and asked, in a pretended careless tone of voice, if he had horses for sale. Receiving a reply in the affirmative, he requested to be shown to the stables, which was done forthwith.

"How much is this beast—the money to be paid in golden guineas?" he asked, singling out the best animal from among a half-dozen.

"Forty guineas ;" said Gotlieb, driving a hard bargain—for the horse was dear at twenty.

"I will take him," said Madden. "What is the price of this saddle, and other gear?"

"Ten guineas," said Gotlieb.

"Have the beast saddled immediately, and here is your money."

The ostler came, and, in a few moments, the sailor was mounted, and riding up Broadway at a careless pace. He felt a strong inclination to set off at the utmost speed, but thought it best to be governed by prudence.

"Pshaw !" he muttered, upon perceiving that he was not pursued ; "I might have spared time to go over the way to Whipple's stables after the steed that brought me from Delaney's last night. No, I might not !" he continued, for now, upon looking back, he perceived a squad of a dozen or so of American troopers issuing from State Street into Broadway.

He still, however, kept a tolerable pace, until, convinced that he was to be pursued, he struck his spurs deep, and drove along at a wild pace.

The road to Harlem at that period—or, at least, one of the roads to that point—branched off from Broadway in a north-easterly direction, commencing at Canal Street and turning into the present Third Avenue, when it was a pretty straight stretch all the way to Harlem.

The Briton pressed his steed into this turn at a mad gallop, throwing a glance behind as he did so, and thereby judging that the interval between him and his pursuers could be little more than a quarter of a mile.

He now looked attentively at the animal he bestrode, surveying him with minute scrutiny. He was a fine beast, evidently of the old English hunter stock, was fully fifteen and a-half hands high, and ran with ease and confidence.

"I am fortunate in my horse, at least," thought Madden.

But the men behind him evidently were as well mounted as he, and he pressed his beast forward to the utmost.

There was satisfaction in the thought that the distance

between him and his pursuers was not lessened. The air rushed through his hair, as he drove against the wind, and the market gardens and orchards on either side of the road seemed to fly past him.

As he wheeled into the straight road (now Third Avenue), one of his pursuers discharged a carbine. The young officer only laughed defiance, as he heard the slug whistle far above his head. But the report of that gun had more meaning than to wing a bullet. It was fired to attract the attention of three cavalymen riding a short distance in front of the hunted man. Madden soon was alarmed to perceive that their attention was arrested.

In fact, they turned, and stood abreast across the road, to bar his way.

The young Briton was brave and hardy, and was not unarmed. Clutching his pistol with his left hand, and a concealed hanger, or short sword, with his right, he dropped the rein on his courser's neck, guiding him by the pressure of his knees as well as he could, and resolved to sell his life as dearly as possible.

They awaited him with drawn sabres, but his rush was irresistible. One of the Americans was unhorsed by the shock, another fell beneath the unerring bullet of his pistol, and, after a severe but brief hand-to-hand fight, the third was disabled in the sword-arm, and called for quarter.

"Take it!" cried Guy Madden, and he again sped on his way—bleeding from a slight wound which he had received in the temple.

His blood was up, for he felt the nervous thrill of victory, but, when he next looked behind, he found that the momentous interval between freedom and capture was lessened by fully one half—owing to the few minutes which he had been delayed in the combat—and he was also alarmed to perceive that his steed had suffered considerably in the shock, for he was breathing heavily, and a large contusion was visible on the left breast. Although the animal, true to his courageous breed, would not succumb, it was doubtful if he would be

able to maintain the necessary pace so far as Harlem. The young man spoke soothingly to the noble brute, and, taking some of his own blood in his hand, leaned forward over the pommel of the saddle, rubbing the warm fluid into the foaming lips and labouring nostrils. This last measure seemed to have an invigorating effect. The necessary speed was maintained until the church-spire of the village of Harlem came in sight.

The pursuing troopers now commenced firing as they rode, and the range was short. Twice did Madden feel that stinging, mortal anguish—never to be forgotten when once experienced—which tells the sufferer that he is heavier than before by half an ounce of lead. But they were not mortal wounds, and the fugitive pressed forward without a cry.

“If I can reach the river, the cold plunge will revive the brute, at least enough to swim me over, when I have a fair chance to reach Delaney’s for a hiding-place.”

These were the forlornly hopeful reflections of the midshipman, as he swept into the by-road, which turned a little to the left—leaving the village on the right—and which he knew would strike the Harlem river nearly opposite Delaney’s, where a rift in the high ground would permit him to reach the water.

The Americans were close behind. They had ceased firing, and now pressed forward with confidence, for they had marked the blood of their flying victim in the white dust.

But he was strong with the hope of youth, and had plenty of vigour in him yet. When about a rod from the water’s edge, however, his horse staggered blindly, and seemed on the point of falling. Madden put his lips to the animal’s ear and spoke in trembling tones to him. The noble creature uttered a shrill neigh of unconquerable pluck, and pressed forward.

The river was reached, and in they plunged, with a great splash. The cold element refreshed the steed amazingly, and he struck out for the opposite shore, with the tact of a good swimmer.

Madden heard his pursuers dash in after him, but did not turn his head.

"The splash will, at least, dampen their infernal carbines," he muttered to himself.

It was a novel and exciting scene, this race for life upon the broad river. The troopers' steeds evidently understood aquatics also, and pushed forward ambitiously.

The shore, on the northern side, as we have already described it, was rocky and precipitous. There was, however, one place where the steep bank did not go sheer into the waves, but presented at its feet a little cove of yellow sand, barely a dozen yards broad. This was a poor landing, but the best.

Madden guided his steed toward it, and after very hard swimming gained it. His horse reached the hard sand, staggered up the beach a few paces, and fell down dead. Throwing one glance of profound admiration upon the creature which had borne him so nobly, the young man sprang into the forest and began to climb the steep bank, though very faint from loss of blood, and suffering many pangs from his wounds.

He heard the troopers land at the same place, leave their horses, and follow him through the woods and up the rocks. He redoubled his exertions, but they were evidently gaining upon him. At length the longed-for goal was in sight, and he staggered into the open space wherein the Tory Delaney had concealed his princely mansion.

But the troopers were at his very heels; in his excited imagination he thought he could feel their panting breath. Faint, desperate, but courageous still, he turned at bay, almost at the door-stoop of the mansion, and struck out wild, blind blows with his hanger. But a dozen swords were against him, and he fell in the midst of his foes, covered with wounds, and his eyeballs glazing in death.

The troopers had finished their mission, and now stood apart, gazing upon their victim with that admiration which the brave accord to the brave.

The house was by this time aroused, and Delaney stood on the stoop with his guests. Then they were all startled by a piercing shriek, and the form of the lady whom we have mentioned as Miss Wainwright rushed wildly to the side of the dying man.

"Guy! Guy! you are not dying? Speak to me! speak to me, Guy!" she exclaimed, in agonizing accents, as she drooped above her bleeding friend.

Madden passed his feeble hand across his eyes, and partially raised himself up by the support of her arm.

"Helen! Helen!" he gasped huskily; "my own Helen! tell me that you love me, for my time is brief!"

"I do! I do, with all my heart, Guy! Oh, God, he is dying!"

The young man put up his lips feebly, and they were bright with a happy smile, as she stooped and kissed them with passionate fervour. But she could not recall with her kisses the fleeting breath; the head of the sufferer dropped back, the jaw fell, and Guy Madden was no more.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF ON THE WATCH.

THERE were few earlier risers in Gotham in the year 1776 than General Washington. On the same morning on which Gilbert Whipple had been convinced of the destructive efficiency of the Golden Shark's blunderbuss, the Commander-in-Chief was pacing the floor of that chamber in which Joe Wilder made his personal acquaintance. Every now and then he would glance out of the window across the bay; and to those who were familiar with the usual composure which characterised his deportment, the General, upon this morning, might have appeared a trifle anxious and out of sorts. The fact is, it was time to hear something of Joe. Not a doubt of the sincerity of the spy crossed the General's mind. He was too good a reader of men to apprehend that he had mistaken young Wilder. But he knew the danger with

which the mission was attended. His kind heart was full of foreboding for the lad's fate. Could it have been other than the general sweetness of soul which this great, good man combined in his character, with firmness, justice, and integrity, that so endeared him to his fellow-citizens? For we do not always love our great men. We admire, very often, with little sympathy. There are comparatively few men whose memories touch our hearts as keenly as they touch our understanding.

General Sullivan had been notified of the departure of the scout, with orders to send a despatch to head-quarters the moment he reached the American lines on Long Island, announcing the fact. But time wore on, and the general's patience becoming exhausted, he prepared to cross over to Sullivan's head-quarters, in hopes of learning something which would relieve him of his anxiety.

The American works, constructed by General Greene—the predecessor of Sullivan—extended across a narrow peninsula, having the East River on the left, a marsh running to the shore on the right, with the bay and Governor's Island in the rear. General Sullivan was encamped, with a strong force, at Brooklyn, within these works, a few miles from Utrecht. From the eastern side of the Narrows extends a ridge of hills, for about six miles, covered with a thick wood, and terminating near Jamaica. Through these hills are only three passes: one near the Narrows; a second on the Flatbush road; and a third called the Bedford road, running across from Bedford to Flatbush, which lies on the southern side of the ridge. These passes are very narrow—the sides exceedingly steep and rugged—so as to be maintained by small number against any force whatever, until dislodged from the heights. These were the only roads which led from the southern side of the hills to the American lines, except one, passing round the eastern extremity of the ridge to Jamaica.

At the moment of which we write the American army—about twenty thousand strong—was in daily expectation of

an attack. Its camp formed a vast crescent, with the bulge of the horn confronting the enemy.

As General Washington rode through the lines of the vigilant troops, cheer after cheer of hearty welcome greeted him ; but he galloped rapidly, attended by a single member of his staff, and made no pause until the tent of General Sullivan was reached. It was in striking contrast to the pretentious pavilion of the British commander, being simply a plain four walls of canvas, the centre-pole running high above the roof, with the American ensign flaunting from it in the breeze.

General Sullivan was not within. Only a staff officer welcomed the Commander-in-Chief as he entered. Washington had scarcely drawn off his gloves before Sullivan arrived.

A few words upon the situation of affairs, and the superior inquired if the scout had appeared.

"I am afraid he is taken," he muttered, upon receiving an answer in the negative ; and he took up that reflective, pensive pace of the apartment which was customary with him upon being harassed with thought.

General Sullivan could give little encouragement to less gloomy conjectures ; for he himself felt that the capture of the scout was more than probable. A passing description of the active commander of the American army may not here be out of place. General Sullivan was a man of strikingly plain and unpretentious attire. He looked like a man for deeds rather than show. Everything about him gave this impression. The sword at his side was heavy and plain, and the scabbard somewhat rusty : but it looked that, if the blade should issue from the sheath, it would do more than glitter in the sunshine. His frame was firmly-knit and muscular ; and there appeared, at the first glance, more of sternness than kindness in his large, strong face. This, in fact, was the character of the man. A strict disciplinarian and a hard fighter, he relied more upon winning the confidence of his troops by startling deeds than inciting their affections in softer ways.

It will be recollected that the command of the works on

Long Island had been given to General Greene. This officer, whose indefatigable and restless spirit led him to endure a greater degree of toil and exposure than prudence would justify, became, at length, so seriously ill, that he was compelled to relinquish the command. He was succeeded by General Sullivan. It was a critical moment, and the danger of exchanging an officer—great at all times, on the eve of battle—was, in this case, rendered more dangerous, from the character of the two generals. The former was extremely cautious—ever on the watch—and never losing his self-command ; the latter was a brave and excellent officer, but rather too adventurous and too confident for the command of such a post, where everything depended on defence. One would have succeeded best in attacking, and the other in sustaining an attack.

There were some moments of profound silence—only broken by the regular footfalls of the Commander-in-Chief as he continued his restless pacing. Sullivan was not willing to break in up on the General's thoughts, and therefore fell to studying some charts upon the table, with the officer of his staff.

In a few moments, however, an orderly entered the tent, and said something to the General in a low voice. The latter, thereupon, immediately got up and spoke to his superior.

"A deserter has just arrived in our lines, General. Shall I have him brought in here?"

"Yes," said General Washington. "We may be able to learn something of our scout," added he, after a pause.

General Washington took a seat and eyed the man closely as he entered. The deserter had entered the tent with much confidence of demeanour ; but his eyes unconsciously fell when they confronted the calm dignity of the American commander. The fatigue dress of the British regulation, in which the deserter was attired, was somewhat ragged and stained. He had a large scar on his cheek, and was otherwise rather unprepossessing upon a first acquaintance.

The General's anxiety upon young Wilder's account prompted his first question to the deserter.

"I am told that you bring us information," said he.

"Tell me, first, if any one was captured within your lines last night, or early this morning?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who was it?"

"A spy, who gave his name as Joseph Wilder."

The General put up his hand to his brow, as if upon a careless impulse; but General Sullivan, who was sitting at his side, saw that the hand was raised to conceal a momentary expression of pain.

"What is to be done with the spy?" resumed the General.

"He will be hung at the boom of the sunset gun."

"When taken, did he reveal anything further than his name?"

"No, sir. He was taken while listening to a council of war, which was going on in General Howe's tent. He boldly acknowledged that he was a spy, when he saw that there was no use in denying it—gave his name; but General Howe threatened to hang him at noon, instead of at sunset, unless he told who sent him and the nature of his mission, and the fellow laughed in his face—merely saying that he would sooner die at noon than any other time, if it would benefit his country's cause."

"Noble fellow!"

Again General Washington's broad hand went up before his face in that seemingly careless way, and again there was a moment of silence.

"You seem to be well posted about this affair, for a mere private," resumed the commander, fixing a keen gaze upon the deserter's face.

"I was not a private, sir," was the reply, "but an orderly to General Clinton. You can see where the chevron was sewed on my sleeve," he continued, pointing to the sleeve of his coat. "I cut off the emblems before I started to desert to your lines."

"You appear to be truthful thus far, at least. If you are informed of all the details of the scout's capture, let me have them. It seems, then, that he succeeded in stealing through your lines to General Howe's tent?"

"Stealing through them!" exclaimed the deserter, with the emphasis with which we admire a desperate deed. "Steal through them!" he repeated. "Why, by heaven, sir, I would almost say that he waded through blood to the commander's pavilion. He literally hewed his way to the heart of the army. It was a glorious deed, if I say it myself! The spy was not particularly reserved upon this point, and I can give you something of his mode of action sir." And he did so, giving a very minute and circumstantial account of Wilder's wonderful achievement.

The deserter ended his narrative; and Washington resumed his former thoughtful walk, for he was sorely troubled at the impending fate of the brave man, who had almost won his promised commission by such matchless valour. There seemed to be little hope that he could be saved. At length, the General paused suddenly, and threw a keen glance at the deserter. He then resumed his seat, and again the man's eyes fell, for there was suspicion in the General's gaze.

"I wish to ask a few more questions of you," said the commander. "In the first place, why do you desert to our lines? I perceive that you are a born Briton."

The man seemed somewhat confused; but answered:—

"Yes, sir, I am an Englishman, but—the fact is, I'm tired of things over there. They don't treat me right; and I thought I would try your side."

"I do not like deserters in any garb," said the General, quietly. "You must give a better reason than that for your defection."

The man was more confused than before. He felt the General's eyes upon him, and they seemed to burn like fire.

"I don't know of any better reason," he stammered. "Seems to me that's a good enough one."

"No, it is not," exclaimed the General, his voice rising shriller and sharper as he spoke. "You keep your hand over your left-hand pocket more than is natural. What have you got there? You have a paper. Let me see it."

"I haven't any paper," said the other, sullenly.

The commander coolly put his hand in the "deserter's" pocket, and drew forth a scrap of paper, upon which was written—and the ink was not old :—

"Pass Private Grimsby (the bearer).

"(Signed) HENRY CLINTON,

"General Commanding.

"By George Abercrombie, A. A. G."

"When was this pass given you?" questioned the General, in a stern voice.

"Yesterday morning."

"You lie, sir."

The deserter shrunk back and trembled visibly.

"You received this pass this morning," continued the chieftain. "You are a spy, sent into our lines by Sir Henry Clinton."

The "deserter" flung himself on his knees. His confidence and hardihood melted like snow before the mighty will by which he was confronted, and he made a confession of the truth.

General Washington turned to General Sullivan, and said :

"General, you will be kind enough to put this man under guard, and have made the necessary preparations to hang him at the boom of the sunset gun, unless Wilder, now in the hands of the enemy, shall have his sentence revoked. In the meantime, despatch a flag of truce to General Howe, with a message to this effect. I will wait here for the answer."

These explicit orders were promptly obeyed. As the spy was being led away, he turned once more, and fell upon his knees before the Commander-in-Chief, and begged for his life. But Washington was implacable.

"I abhor this practice of hanging spies as much as any man in America," he said. "But, if General Howe persists in inaugurating it, I must and will retaliate. Prisoner, follow your guard." And the spy was, forthwith, conducted away.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GALLOWS-TREE.

THE most solemn of all pageants is that of a public execution. Inexpressibly solemn and impressive is such an occasion in a large army. Every detail of preparation, even the smallest, is of painful, morbid interest.

It soon became noised through the American camp that a spy was to be hung at sunset, and the few loungers of the busy camp were soon gathered about the tree which was undergoing a conversion into a gallows ; and speculation was everywhere busy with the prisoner. His character, crime, personal appearance, were all discussed with that morbid garrulity which possesses men upon such occasions.

Meantime, the flag of truce had been duly sent to the British camp—which was but a few miles distant—and General Washington was anxiously awaiting the result in General Sullivan's tent.

No one could be more painfully impressed with the duty which had suddenly devolved upon him, of depriving a fellow-creature of life by the hangman's noose, than Washington. Although he is said to have had a "great antipathy to spies," he used them himself, and his nature revolted from the barbarous practice—then and still in vogue—of putting them to death.

But, humane and noble as he was, he felt it to be his bounden duty to protect, as much as possible, his own scouts, by a rigid rule of retaliation.

Not quite two hours had elapsed when the flag of truce returned, with a notification that the Yankee scout would meet his fate at sunset, in spite of whatever retaliation the

American commander might see fit to institute. Accompanying this intelligence, was a brief note from General Howe, informing General Washington that it was not so much the fact of Wilder being a spy, as it was the bloody career which had led him into the British lines, for which he was condemned to death. The note then briefly recited the number of Joe's victims, and closed with a protest against retaliation upon the British spy. General Washington merely sent back word renewing his threat of retaliation ; and then returned to New York—first promising to return before sundown ; for he was determined to witness the execution in case Joe's fate was not averted.

Half-an-hour before the appointed time everything was in preparation for the execution. Two battalions of Maryland troops were ordered to march to the scene, and all who were off duty were there before them. With a firm and solemn step, the two columns came slowly up, and surrounded the gallows-tree to the mournful tap of the muffled drum. The gallows was formed out of a great oak tree. The branches were lopped off to within thirty feet from the ground. A large, straight limb at that height had already dangling from it the rope with the fatal noose at the end. And just beneath this branch, the rough but substantial scaffold was erected, trap-door, supporting posts, and everything complete.

A deep silence pervaded the large concourse while the troops were forming in the hollow square around the scaffold—now and then slightly broken by a low hum as some general or other dignitary made his appearance upon the ground ; for the Commander-in-Chief was determined to render the scene as public as possible. An execution within the American lines was a rare occurrence at that period. The system of retaliation was a grave subject, and it was as well, perhaps, that a scene like this should be rendered exceedingly impressive. Many chieftains were present. Colonel Atlee and Colonel Smallwood were visible near the left of the platform ; Colonel Hatche and the redoubtable Colonel

Miles were to be seen on the right, and not far from the latter's position was the noble figure of Lord Stirling, with his staff around him. Few men in the Continental army were more respected than Lord Stirling. Yet he was a man whose many noble qualities were considerably marred by unaccountable prejudices. He, however, always remained proof against the tempting offers with which the Royal authorities frequently endeavoured to seduce him from his allegiance to the cause of liberty. He was somewhat notorious for his indignation at the British employment of foreign mercenaries, and at their endeavours to induce the slaves of the Americans to fight against their masters.

"The Hessians plunder all indiscriminately, Tories as well as Whigs," says the *Freeman's Journal*, of October 29th, 1776. "If they see anything they want, they seize it, and say, 'Rebel good for Hesse man.' A Tory complained to General Howe that he was plundered by the Hessians. The General said he could not help it—it was their way of making war. So the friends of the [English] Government are protected. Lord Dunmore told Lord Stirling he was sorry he kept such company. His lordship replied: 'My Lord, I kept whiter company than your lordship has of late.'" This last sentence alluded to Lord Dunmore's enlisting Virginia negroes to fight against their masters.

The throngs continued to increase about the scaffold as the hour drew nigh. Presently there was another hum through the crowd, and, shortly afterward, the commanding figure of the General-in-Chief, attended by numerous staff officers, appeared upon the scene, slowly riding through the throng to a little eminence, near Lord Stirling's position.

Shortly afterward the beat of the muffled drum was again heard. It was from the guard who were escorting the prisoner to the scaffold. He walked bareheaded in the square which they formed around him. When they reached the foot of the scaffold, the soldiers filed off and stood on each side of the steps, with their muskets at "present arms." The prisoner was attended by Captain Harker, of the 3rd

Virginia Riflemen, and also by the chaplain of the same regiment. He declined their assistance, and mounted the scaffold unaided, with a firm, dignified step. He was in his shirt-sleeves. His throat was bare as well as his head. He seemed to mount with a fearless heart. He was a handsome fellow, on the whole, tall, brawny, and well-featured, and appeared far more prepossessing than when he stood in the commander's tent in the character of a British spy.

Some pious persons shudder at that expression, "he died game;" but most of us have an unconscious admiration when we hear of it. For there is, after all, something exalting in this facing of the grim destroyer with a fearless heart.

The Briton took his position on the platform with folded arms. He saw the executioner go beneath, in order to be ready with the bolt which upheld the trap-door, but he exhibited no sign of emotion. Upon being asked if he had anything to say, he simply shook his head and was silent.

The sun was sinking in the west, through a glory of purple and gold. In a few minutes the burning disk would disappear, the signal cannon would boom, and in all probability the soul of the prisoner would be launched into eternity. It was a glorious August evening. The entire occident was a sea of golden fire; and the half-moon, which was also sloping toward the western hills, was half extinguished in the burning billows of light which the dying day-god emitted as he rolled to rest. The world was bright and blooming; and the silence which fell upon it—upon the hills, the meadows, the woods, and the glittering waters of the neighbouring bay, was inexpressibly solemn and beautiful. It may be that a sense of horror crept into the heart of the prisoner as he surveyed this glorious scene, which he was soon to quit for ever but, not a tear or tremor of the lip betrayed the emotion, if it was experienced.

The silence grew deeper as the moments flew.

At length the signal came—the long, deep boom of the sunset gun, and there was a stir through the crowd. The

prisoner started at the sound of the signal, but he quickly recovered his composure, and remained as implacable as before.

Captain Harker and the chaplain stepped forward and conducted him upon the fatal trap. The white cap was placed upon his head, drawn over his eyes, his arms pinioned, and the noose quickly adjusted about his throat. The executioner—a man obtained from one of the Connecticut regiment in a choice lot—stood ready beneath. In another instant Captain Harker would have given the signal ; but now a horseman was seen galloping toward them, shouting vociferously and waving a white handkerchief ; and a sign from General Sullivan caused the fatal signal to be deferred.

Great excitement was manifested by the assembly as the rider made his way through their midst to General Washington.

“What is it ?” asked the latter, in hasty tones, for he sympathised with the dreadful suspense of the delay upon the mind of the prisoner.

“Wilder is saved !” gasped the horseman. “He has just escaped into our lines, General.”

“Then the execution must proceed,” said Washington, and he made a sign to General Sullivan to that effect.

Sullivan hesitated. Lord Stirling spurred quickly to the side of the General-in-Chief, and spoke some earnest words. General Sullivan and Colonel Miles followed—all pleading for the man’s life. Washington hesitated. An expression of pain came across his face, which was succeeded by a thoughtful composure. In a moment his decision was formed. His pity triumphed, and he ordered the prisoner to be returned to prison, there to await further orders.

The spy received this intelligence with as much bravery and composure as he had confronted death. He was conducted from the scaffold, and passed away in silence.

But the crowd did not disperse immediately, for a group was observed approaching, supporting the form of the young patriot, Joe Wilder.

A long, wild, joyous shout, in which even the general officers heartily joined, greeted the return of the valiant scout. Joe was hardly recognizable. His clothes were in tatters, and, in many places, red and dark with the blood from his many wounds. His face was emaciated and as white as snow. His left arm was in a sling ; and he limped painfully as he quitted the support of his companions and staggered towards the Commander-in-Chief. But his strength failed him, and he swooned quite away, prostrate, at the white charger's feet.

General Washington hastily dismounted, and caught the poor fellow by the hand. His lip trembled as he did so. General Sullivan also dismounted by the side of the unconscious scout.

"General," said the Commander-in-Chief, "have the brave fellow taken to your own tent. And, Doctor Whitaker"—turning to the chief surgeon—"pray accompany them and attend to his wounds yourself."

These orders were promptly obeyed. Joe was carefully lifted and conveyed to the comfortable tent of General Sullivan, where he was soon restored to comparative ease, and his wounds—none of them very serious—skilfully attended to by the surgeon-general.

As the scout was borne through the throngs of soldiers, cheer upon cheer arose around him ; for the story of his desperate adventures had by this time been made known to the entire army.

About nine o'clock of that evening, Joe awoke from a refreshing slumber. Shortly afterwards Generals Washington and Sullivan were by his side, and as he told them the result of the conference in General Howe's tent, he had the satisfaction to perceive, by the eager attention which it excited, the vital importance of that information which had so nearly cost him his life.

"Now, rest again, my brave fellow," said the Commander-in-Chief, when the brief recital was finished. "We have already heard of your wonderful adventures and your

splendid courage. The whole army thanks you most heartily for it."

"But my commission, General; have I won my commission?" asked the young man, eager, even in his suffering, for the prize.

"Fairly, nobly!" was the hearty reply. "Your information is of incalculable value. You shall be upon my own staff, with the rank of captain. I will do more. I will recommend you to Congress for a brevet-major.

Too happy to speak, Joe pressed the hand of the generous chieftain, and was silent for some moments.

Then, suddenly recollecting the danger in which his beloved Katrina was left, he started up in affright, and would have risen from the couch, had he not been restrained. He hastily recounted what was overheard in the wood between Whipple and his minion.

A dark shade passed over the General's benevolent face as he obtained this convincing proof of the treachery of a man whom he had long suspected. Assuring the anxious lover that the plot should be duly frustrated, he left the tent, accompanied by Sullivan; and Joe, left alone, and much easier in his mind, again fell into a quiet, dreamless slumber.

CHAPTER X.

HOW JOE DID IT.

JOE WILDER was ready with his pen, and it was his custom to keep a regular diary of his adventures throughout the war. In that diary we find a very interesting and detailed account of his escape from the hands of the British; and, as we must, sooner or later, satisfy the curious reader upon that point, we might as well tell it at once, and in Joe's own language.

"At first I despaired completely (says he in his journal), when I found myself wounded and in the enemy's hands: But I resolved to 'die game,' since die I must, and therefore

put as cheerful a face upon the affair as the exceedingly doleful circumstances would allow.

“The prison to which I was conveyed consisted of a small, one-storied, one-roomed stone house, not far from the bay, which had evidently been used originally as a smoke-house. Since the British had crossed from Staten Island, the commander had had the door of this building strengthened and supplied with heavy bolts, and the single window barred with iron—intending to use it as extraordinary guard-house on special occasions. I was not its first occupant, however, for there were numerous charcoal inscriptions and drawings upon the wall, which must have been the work of some previous prisoner. I remember that one of these inscriptions appeared to be in a dead language—Latin, I suppose. The drawings, too, as far as I can judge, were not devoid of a certain merit. I fancy the prisoner must have been of some rank—or, perhaps, some poor devil of a scholar, who had been impressed in England, and had endeavoured to run off as soon as he reached this side. At any rate, the place was desolate enough. There was not a vestige of furniture in the apartment—simply a miserable heap of straw, for a bed, in one corner, an earthen jug, and a tin plate, with a rusty knife. They took all my weapons away from me before they thrust me into the dungeon. Then a young surgeon came and dressed my wounds—not caring a farthing how much he hurt me—and I was left alone to reflections gloomy enough, I can assure you.

“Knowing that it could not be long before the bodies of the men I had slain would be discovered, I had not a particle of doubt that General Howe’s promise to hang me some time during the day would be piously fulfilled. Then there was that incessant, harassing thought of what would become of Katrina in my absence, which was enough to drive a fellow mad.

“But my feelings are as buoyant as a soap-bubble. I believe I was never totally hopeless, for an hour on the stretch, in the course of my life. And now, after lying for

some time on my back, I began to feel a little more cheerful, and fancied that it wouldn't do any harm to examine the premises, at least. I was further encouraged to find that my wounds were all mere flesh-wounds, and that I had not lost so much blood as I had supposed.

"The day was just breaking over the hills, as I looked out of the grated window, with every promise of a glorious day. I could only see one sentinel—the one who was tramping up and down before the window, and who saw me looking out—but I could hear the tramp of another one on the other side of the house.

"'Take your head back from that window, you Yankee villain, or I'll blow your head off,' growled the sentinel, with an oath.

"'It's better to be shot than hung,' I replied, without moving from my position; and the sentry lowered his threatening musket, and continued his round, growling something which I could not hear.

"After admiring the morning landscape sufficiently, I drew back from the window, and began to examine with more attention the interior of the apartment.

"The room was quite small, barely twenty feet square, I should judge. The walls were thick, of rough granite, but smooth and partially plastered on the inside. The rafters above were bare of any ceiling, which enabled me to look up into the top of the peaked roof.

"There wasn't much to see in the room, and I wasn't long in seeing it all. I picked up a miserable case-knife—the only edged tool I could find—with a glimmering hope that it might avail me something. But I soon saw that it was of no account. I could bend the wretched metal in my fingers like a piece of tin. There were some large hooks in the rafters above. They had evidently been used to suspend the meat in the old smoke-house. If I could reach and draw out one of the largest of the staples, I fancied that I would find the other end strong and sharp enough to work my way through the wall. But there was nothing to stand on, and the rafters

were far above my head. After all, what good would it do to pick a hole through the wall, even if that were possible? It was already almost broad daylight, and if I was to be hanged on that day it would be necessary to work by day, which would almost certainly ensure detection. Again, I became despondent.

"I was aroused from my reflections by some one fingering at the bolts, and had just time to throw myself on the heap of straw and feign to be utterly exhausted, when the door opened, and a soldier entered, bringing me some food and water. I pretended the utmost difficulty in getting at the food from its position on the floor, where he placed it, and begged for something to place it upon—a stool or anything. The man was good-natured, and promised to procure me one if he could get permission to do so. He went out. Although as hungry as a bear-cub, I did not touch the food till he returned, bringing with him, to my great joy, a roughly-fashioned three-legged stool. I thanked him kindly, and he went away.

"I ate my breakfast with an excellent appetite. A long pull at the jug of water refreshed me still more. I then got upon the stool, and found that I could easily reach one of the larger hooks. But to draw it out of the beam was another matter. I forgot to mention that my left shoulder, very near the armpit, where I had been wounded the most severely, was the greatest obstacle to making use of my whole powers. I could use my left arm a little; but it was attended with excessive pain—especially when I raised it up, as I was now compelled to do, in working at the hook. I soon had the mortification of confessing to myself that the extraction of the hook was, under the circumstances, an impossibility. I tried some of the other hooks and staples, but they were all firmly imbedded in the hard, smoke-seasoned timber.

"I was about to give up all hope of escape, and resign myself to my fate, when my eye caught sight of something on the ledge of the wall, between the top of the wall and the

commencement of the rising roof. It looked like the edge of a scythe-blade, or some other strong, keen instrument. But again my heart sunk.

“The ledge was far above my head. To reach it, it would be necessary to draw myself up by the main force of arms, and throw myself over one of the beams, whence I should probably be enabled to work my way along to the ledge of the wall. With sound body and limbs, I should have laughed at such a feat as this. But now my left arm was almost powerless. I tried in vain to get upon the beam, and at length returned to my pallet of straw, exhausted with repeated efforts, and my left arm considerably swollen and very painful.

“I thought of the persevering spider which had encouraged Baron Trenck to renewed efforts in his prison. But if there had been a dozen of the cheerful and persistent insects in my cell, I don’t think their example could have awakened my exhausted powers to another effort. I would willingly have exchanged the troublesome mosquitoes, however, for a regiment of spiders.

“But, at length, I thought of Katrina, and the agonizing reflections of what might be the consequence of my continued absence to her seemed to inspire me with superhuman vigour. I was never a sincere believer in special providences until that moment. But I can ascribe to no natural agency the wondrous energy with which I was suddenly imbued.

“I speak the truth when I say that, with one hand, I drew myself up to my chin, and flung myself over the beam. It was still a difficult task to work my way along the rafter, but I accomplished it, and reached the ledge of the wall. To my gratification, I found it to be a depository of various tools, which had probably been hidden there upon the approach of the invading army. I secured a spade, a stout hatchet, and a mallet and chisel. Deeming these sufficient, I dropped them down—their fall upon the floor, which was nothing but the ground, precluding their making a noise—and then descended myself, much faster than I had clambered up.

“I now set to work, behind the heap of straw, to mine my

way through the wall—selecting this spot, because I believed it would give me an egress between the sentinels, instead of at right angles to the up-and-down tramp of either. I judged of this by the sound of their steps, and thought that I might then choose my time and make a rush for the marsh, which was situated a short distance below General Howe's tent, and not very far, I judged, from my place of incarceration.

"I set to work perseveringly at the foot of the wall—picking out the mortar with my chisel, and prying at the stones with my hatchet and spade. But, the job gave promise of being both long and tedious. If out of ear-shot, I could have breached the foundation in an hour. But the close proximity of the sentries necessitated light blows and the utmost caution.

"However, by about ten o'clock, as I judged by the sun, I had picked out a large block, when some one at the door again alarmed me. Hastily covering my tools and the loosened mortar with the straw, I again resumed my painful attitude of recumbency, with, now and then, a groan or two to make things more natural.

"I was surprised by the entrance of General Howe. He was attended by one of his officers, and spoke rather harshly, I thought, considering the pitiable figure I cut.

"'It has been decided, prisoner, that you shall be executed on the evening of this day, at sunset,' said he. 'Have you anything to say in regard to your sentence?'

"I shook my head feebly.

"'But have you nothing to say,' he continued, with some heat, 'of the ruthless assassinations which have marked your course in my camp? How can you reconcile your own conscience to these hideous crimes?'

"'I do not consider myself guilty of any crimes,' I replied, not caring how boldly I spoke. 'I am no assassin. The men whom I slew in your camp could, each of them, have been stricken down by me from behind, and never have seen the hand that felled them. Each one of them I confronted before I struck, and with each I had a fair, free fight. I consider it no crime to take the lives of my country's

foes, in fair contest. If what I have done shall have contributed but a hair's-breadth to the success of our cause, I shall die contented.'

"The General knit his brows, and paced the floor for a few moments in silence. Then he said:—

" 'Who sent you upon this mission?'

" 'My superior.'

" 'His name?'

" 'You will not obtain it from me.'

" 'You must answer my queries,' said the General, angrily. 'It is in my power to have your sentence carried out upon this instant if I choose. It may be found more expedient to fix your execution at noon,' he added, with a slight sneer.

" 'If you are sufficiently mean to rob a doomed man of any portion of his little lease of life, you are welcome to do so,' I replied; 'but I shall certainly not answer the question you have propounded.'

"He knit his brows again, but did not renew his threat.

" 'Are you acquainted in New York?' was his next inquiry.

" 'To a very considerable extent, sir,' I replied.

" 'What do you know of General Washington?'

" 'Nothing more than that he is a Christian gentleman and a glorious soldier.'

" 'What do you know of a Mr. Gilbert Whipple?'

" 'I know him for a mean-souled, white-livered Tory dog; and one whose lease of life will probably be materially strengthened by my decease.'

" 'A personal enemy, eh?'

" 'Yes, sir. When we meet, he dies.'

" 'It is not at all probable that you will meet—in this world,' said General Howe.

"He relapsed into silence, and presently departed, saying nothing more; but I thought that he did not seem so stern when he went away.

"Left alone, I again fell to work on my mining operation, and continued it for hours without interruption. But it was

a trying task. Sometimes I would peg away for half an hour and hardly succeed even in loosening a fragment. Then, again, I would roll out a huge block with comparatively little exertion, only to be stalled immediately afterward by a more difficult obstruction.

"It must have been five o'clock when I reached the outer layer of the thick wall. To that distance I had succeeded in making a very wide breach—so large, indeed, that I was fearful of being unable to conceal it, should I be again interrupted. But no one came.

"This outer stratum, which I had now reached, was the thinnest of all. My object was to loosen this completely, without detaching a stone, until I was ready for my attempt; when I intended to seize the hatchet for a weapon, suddenly burst through the wall by an impetuous rush, and make for the marsh. If I once reached that, I was confident of escape, for I was familiar with its intricacies, having been reared within a short distance of it. It was an exceedingly treacherous soil, with a little island of firm land in the midst, beyond which was an extensive jungle of tangled reeds and alder bushes, which I had frequently explored as a boy, in search of waterfowl. But one path led to this island, and that was tortuous, and in many places concealed, and as quaky as a bowl of stiff jelly. A stranger, in attempting to pursue it, would mire before half way across. Once upon this island, I felt positive that I could reach the Continental lines without interruption from human foes, at least, for the marsh extended far up the shore, and grew more treacherous at every rod.

"But this last part of my 'running operation' was by far the most delicate and dangerous of all. If a single stone should happen to fall out, in the course of my manipulation of the interstices, the attention of the guard would most likely be attracted, and my death by the hangman insured. Then, again, if I should miscalculate the weakness of the wall—if I should make my rush against it too soon—an insufficient breach would be made, and my plot nipped in the bud.

“Nevertheless, there was no time to spare. I feared every instant to hear the coming of some one to prepare me for the scaffold. Therefore, I worked with a will—cautiously, but with trembling hands.

“At length I got the layer of stones almost destitute of mortar, and concluded that it was about time to make my attempt. I listened attentively till I thought the two sentinels were furthest away, and then, seizing my hatchet, I burst against the wall with such force as to bruise myself considerably. The wall yielded as if by magic, and my sheer momentum rolled me out with the fragments.

“For a second or two the dust of the tumbling fabric concealed me; besides this the guards, for a few seconds, must have been transfixed with astonishment at the sudden opening of the solid wall. I was on my legs in an instant, and away like a bird, with a ringing cry, for I saw freedom in the far distance like a signal of hope.

“Crack! went one of their muskets in my rear, and I was unhurt; crack! went the other, and ‘I was hit jist where he missed me before,’ as the Irishman said. The drums beat, the bugles brayed, the whole camp was aroused. But I was beyond gun-shot of most of them. The marsh was in sight. With a wild shout I dashed toward it, when a single soldier rose in my path and cocked his gun. I had learned to fling the tomahawk, and I let him have my hatchet like a flying bolt. He went down with a cloven skull; but I tripped in passing over his body, and fell full length, thereby bruising my wounded shoulder to such a degree that I shrieked for pain. Quickly regaining my feet, however, I recovered my weapon, and, a moment after, was flying across the quaking bog—followed by a shower of bullets, but fortunately receiving no further wounds.

“Reaching the little island, I rolled over on the firm turf, completely spent. I had the satisfaction of witnessing five or six dragoons, who had pursued me, floundering in the marsh up to their horses’ bellies, and surpassing their fellow-soldiers in Flanders in point of oath-taking; while

the remainder of the army—to all appearances—were collecting on the verge of the treacherous mire, shouting and jawing each other to their hearts' content.

"I lay until somewhat rested—not at all fearful that any of them would succeed in reaching me. When I got upon my legs again I was surprised to find that I was very lame. This was from one of my wounds of the morning. The excitement had prevented my noticing it for the while; but now, when my blood was cooling, it began to bite like a thousand scorpions, and I could only walk with the greatest difficulty.

"However, walk I *must*, and walk I did. I proceeded to pick my way through the reeds to the northward, and, after an hour or more of indescribable suffering, succeeded in reaching the American pickets, who were grumbling at not being able to be present with the rest of the army at the execution of the British spy.

"A party of them helped me into camp, but I fainted twice on the way."

CHAPTER XI.

THE BLUNDERBUSS BLUNDER.

To return to New York and the Golden Shark.

Old Gotlieb Von Snooze had felt peculiarly satisfied with himself ever since his triumphant vindication of the efficacy of his funnel-mouthed blunderbuss.

"I guess Mr. Vipple von't vant to makes my leetle gal cry de next time, ven he makes nutting," was his ambiguous but complacent reflection, as he stood basking in the beams of the setting sun, at his tavern door.

But Gotlieb would have thought differently, if he had been more conversant with the character of Katrina's "gentleman" suitor.

Whipple really was moved by a deep and powerful passion for the landlord's daughter. Designing to make her his wife at all hazards, a forcible abduction was deemed necessary.

He was just shallow enough to imagine that she would forgive him, when he should be enabled to surround her with the splendour of a position foreign to and beyond that to which she had been accustomed. But Gilbert Whipple was not the first man of whom passion had made a fool.

Of a wealthy English family, and born in England, his faults probably were the result of his caste education, rather than of any natural depravity. He was the possessor of vast wealth—most of it in his native land—and was thus independent enough to be careless of any opposition which his relatives might make to a marriage beneath his social position. We have only introduced him to the reader as a gay gentleman, endeavouring to steal a kiss or two from a pretty girl. But there was more than this. It rankled in his breast that he had once asked Katrina to be his wife, and had met with a refusal. He was pertinacious, unscrupulous, and powerful; and what he could not win by love, he was, at last, resolved to obtain by force—not doubting that she would be readily dazzled by the position she would attain upon reaching England with him as his bride, and that she would rather thank than repulse the hand which exalted her to it.

Had Whipple made his first advances to the father, instead of the daughter, it is possible that he would have found a powerful ally in the former; for, as we have already seen, Gottlieb's vanity was great, and it does not seem likely that he would have been able to resist a suitor of Whipple's position and opulence. But the old man's prejudices were as strong as his vanity, and now the distrust he had naturally conceived for the rich man was implacable.

We left the Dutch landlord standing on the steps of his tavern. He felt very contented with all the world. He was well to do; he hadn't a shadow of a doubt that General Washington was going to drive "ter Pritishers," as he called them, into the Atlantic Ocean, in a very short time; the bay looked beautiful as it danced in the mellow splendour of the sinking sun; the Golden Shark on the top of the sign also

gleamed as if it were gold indeed ; the war brought the tavern plenty of profitable custom ; and, in fact, Gotlieb was very well pleased with himself and everything else. He was not even, at present, especially put out with Whipple, as he remembered the Tory's astonishment at the effects of the blunderbuss.

But now, as he looked across the street, he saw a man enter Whipple's house, whose appearance served to recall his suspicions. This was the man whom we have already introduced to the reader—the hero of the leaky boat. Gotlieb knew him, and for no good. He knew him for an unscrupulous tool of the bad man over the way, and he, therefore, experienced a change in his current of thought. It was for this reason that, when he entered his bar-room, he said to Katrina :—

“My tear, I shall sit up in de bar-room all night mit him.”

Katrina's wide eyes grew wider with astonishment.

“Sit up, father ! With who—with what ?” she exclaimed.

“Mit mine goon,” said Gotlieb, quietly reaching for the blunderbuss.

So his daughter said nothing more, but merely went to superintend the serving up of the supper, leaving her father attentively examining his gun, to see if its priming, powder, and quart measure of bullets were in their proper places. And after tea was over, Gotlieb could do little of anything else than manipulate and play with his favourite weapon. Katrina felt a certain sense of oppression at the novelty of the thing, when she went to bed in the evening, after the house was closed, and left her father, sitting in his easy chair, caressing his blunderbuss between his knees, and with a bright light burning at his side. But the sense of the ridiculous took possession of her mind, and, an hour or so later, she was induced to steal down from her chamber to see how her protector was progressing in his guard duty.

The light was still burning brightly, but the old man was fast and sound asleep in his chair with the blunderbuss lying

harmlessly across his knees. Katrina spoke to him, but he did not stir. So she returned to her room, not apprehending danger, and inwardly laughing at the manner in which her doughty guardian was fulfilling his self-imposed duty of an armed sentinel.

But the old Dutchman was a better protector than even his little daughter gave him credit for. There was one thing which never failed to awake him, and that was the deep voice of his watch-dog, which was kept in the backyard of the tavern. A cannon might have been fired under his window without arousing him, but the bark of old Blok would startle him out of the deepest slumber. It was not more than an hour after Katrina's visit that the landlord was awakened by this trusty summons. He started, rubbed his eyes, and listened again, almost doubting his hearing had served him correctly. He heard the bark again, and this time there was no mistaking it. It was the harsh, savage bark of the watch-dog, which was premonitory of danger. Then there came the sharp crack of a pistol, a wild, agonising howl of pain and anger, and all was silent again.

By this time the old man was thoroughly alarmed. He hastened into the entry with the light in his hand. Pausing at the foot of the stairs, he called out nervously—

“Katrina ! Katrina !”

There was no answer.

With a cold, sick feeling about his fatherly heart, he hurried up the staircase to her chamber. The door was locked, but he burst it in by a single push of his massive shoulder. Katrina was not there ! The window was open looking out upon the porch roof. Above the gutter-trough of this roof projected a ladder. The room gave evidence of a struggle, for the furniture was overturned, the clothes scattered about, and Katrina's dress dangled from the high bedpost, showing that she must have been taken out in great haste.

Now old Gotlieb was not by nature a brave man, but when he saw that his life's treasure—his darling daughter—had really been torn from him, and when he surmised that

the author of the deed must be none other than the "gentleman" over the way, he became another man, and as courageous as a lion; his teeth came together sharply and firmly, and, with an inward vow of vengeance, he rushed downstairs and out of the house, with the blunderbuss in his hands.

The first thing he stumbled over in the yard was the dead body of his faithful Blok, which explained the meaning of the pistol-shot and the howl which he had heard. Gottlieb also caught a glimpse in the distance of the disappearing forms of several men, one of whom he thought bore Katrina in his arms. With a shout of vengeance, the old man started in pursuit. His unwieldy figure seemed to be suddenly gifted with wings, as he plunged down the long, dark alley leading directly to the river, from Broadway. The men were evidently badly scared, for they had not fled far before the one who carried the maiden laid down his burden, and went on without it. But Gottlieb was not to be stayed by the recovery of his child alone. He pursued the villains further, and, just as they turned into the river street, he brought his blunderbuss to his shoulder, and blazed away, bringing down the man who had borne Katrina.

Almost simultaneously with the discharge of his weapon, he heard the tramp, tramp of soldiers, and had the satisfaction, upon arriving in the open street, of seeing the remainder of the ruffians brought to a stand-still by a squad of Washington's own guard.

"Holt 'em, holt 'em, till I loads mine ploonderpuss vonce more!" shouted the innkeeper, as he came panting up to the group.

A few words explained everything to the corporal of the squad, and the men were taken into custody.

The party then proceeded to the fallen body of the man whom the blunderbuss had brought to earth. It proved to be that of Gilbert Whipple himself. He was stone dead, and the ghastly appearance of the corpse caused an exclamation of wonder from the soldiers. The Tory had received

the entire charge of the blunderbuss in his back, between the shoulders, and was absolutely riddled with balls.

"There's not much danger of his waking up," observed one of the men.

"Nein ! and it vos all t'rough mine prave old ploonderpuss—de goon of mine forefaders !" said Gotlieb, proudly patting the stock of his weapon.

He then proceeded homeward, and gently lifted from the ground the still senseless form of poor Katrina. She had been surprised in her deep sleep, gagged, and borne away, and had fainted through excess of terror, but was not harmed. She was soon revived, and recovered her vivacity, both of body and mind ; but there was very little further sleeping done upon that night in the Golden Shark Tavern.

Thus perished Gilbert Whipple—a bold, talented man—in the commission of a deed which, most likely, benefited his future as little as it did his earthly existence. His companions in crime were conveyed to prison, and, in the course of time, received a meet reward for their evil deeds.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND.

AN hour before the dawn of the 27th of August, 1776, the attack upon the American lines was in active preparation—indeed, more than half of the British Army was already on the move.

At the same time, and before the guns of either army were heard, old Gotlieb Von Snooze electrified his pretty daughter by shouldering his blunderbuss and signifying his intention to participate in the fight. All entreaties upon her part had no effect in altering the stern resolve of her father.

"Vot !" he exclaimed, "shall de descendant of de great admiral keep de ploonderpuss of his forefaders silent ven de British makes fight on Sheneral Vashington ? Never ! Vot for you makes ven you makes nutting ? Farevell, mine child ! I goes to de fight. I may makes myself von Major-

Sheneral or von cold and silent dead man, but I goes an does mine duty !”

And he did. He crossed at Fulton-street, and was soon in line with a body of minute-men, who had preceded him from the city but a few moments before. That blunderbuss was the wonder of the soldiers. Many were the curious eyes which examined it in old Gotlieb's hands. The officers, in fact, had much trouble in keeping the not too orderly volunteers in line, so eager were they to explore the mystery of the queer old piece.

“One pound of bullets to a load !” cried one. “Why don't you go into the flying artillery ?”

“Guess we'll let the old chap do all the fighting to-day,” said another ; “because there won't be many red-coats left if he works well.”

“I vill works well—so petter as nopody, and vill kill every nasty Hessian vot comes over de hills !” was Gotlieb's patriotic reply.

But the fighting landlord was not permitted to show his prowess. Much to his chagrin, he was ordered out of the ranks and given in charge of an orderly-sergeant, who conducted him, with every respect, to the ferry ; and Gotlieb, despite his threats to report all to the Commander-in-Chief—despite his assertions that the blunderbuss would destroy a whole regiment at a shot—was ushered into the ferry, with orders to report at once to the Golden Shark. He arrived at the inn too indignant and crestfallen to “report” anything, even to the inquisitive and anxious Katrina. The martial flint-lock was hung up on its pegs in the wall, and Gotlieb heaved a sigh like the running down of a furnace-blower as he thought of the glory denied him.

The valuable information, obtained through the agency of Joe Wilder, had enabled the American chieftains to materially strengthen their position by an advantageous posting of certain divisions. General Washington is reported to have said that, were it not for the anticipation of the mode and ~~o~~ exact time of the British attack, which he received from his

daring scout, it was very probable the American army would have been utterly annihilated. As it was, he was enabled to use his greatly inferior force to such advantage that, in the event of disaster, the integrity of the army was preserved.

The battle of Long Island was a most important one, if we judge battles, as we should do, by their immediate consequences. In the tremendous civil war of 1861—4, an affair like that of which this chapter treats, would be considered as nothing more than an extensive skirmish—so powerful is the consideration of the numbers engaged. But, viewed in the light of history, the humble but sanguinary battle of Long Island was more important in its bearings upon the destinies of a people than either of the terrific and stupendous struggles of Chickamunga and Chattanooga. The two latter decided the occupation of a few—comparatively few—acres of an enemy's territory, whose acres were to be numbered by millions. The former decided the occupation of an extensive commercial port—the *entrepôt* of a budding nation, with its harbours, ships, houses, and stores.

The battle appeared at hand so early as the 23rd. Everything had been prepared, as well as possible, for the attack at that time. The orders were admirably calculated to awaken a martial spirit in the American troops. The parole was Charleston, and the countersign Lee—the former inspiring a recollection of the successful defence of Fort Moultrie and Sullivan Islands, from which the enemy had been repulsed but a short time before.

The passage of the East River, at this time, was so obstructed by booms, chains, and *chevaux-de-frise* as to quiet, in a great measure, all apprehensions on that side.

On the 24th, Washington detached four additional regiments to the support of General Sullivan, with boats, to be ready either to reinforce him or to return to New York, if the remainder of the fleet, then at the watering-place, should menace the city.

Reinforcements were constantly passing to Long Island, and occasionally a little skirmishing took place between small

parties, in the course of which Colonel Manning, of the Jersey levies, received a mortal wound, and some few men were lost. Nine out of fourteen regiments, expected from Connecticut, had now arrived, averaging about three hundred and fifty men each, and making the entire numerical force of Washington about twenty thousand. But of these, a heavy proportion were in the hospitals and on furlough.

The hour of battle at length arrived—at daylight of the 27th, as we have already intimated.

Although the American forces numbered twenty thousand, the effectives, probably, did not exceed sixteen thousand five hundred.

The operations of the enemy had been delayed from day to day, in expectation of reinforcements, until the 22nd, when, by the accession of the South Carolina troops, with others from Boston, Florida, and the West Indies, their army amounted to nearly thirty thousand. With these it was determined to make the attempt. On this day, the 22nd, the fleet being so stationed as to cover the troops, they were landed without opposition on Long Island, between Utrecht and Gravesend, two small villages not far from the Narrows, on the side nearest to Staten Island.

It is necessary, in order that the reader may clearly comprehend the battle which followed, that we should thus particularise the details of movements immediately preceding it.

The American works, as already stated, extended, in horse-shoe form, across a narrow peninsula, having the East River on the left, a marsh on the right, with the Bay and Governor's Island in the rear. A great portion of what is now the city of Brooklyn would thus be inclosed in the concave of the semicircular line.

This position was not naturally of great strength. We have already mentioned the approaches to it, through the hills at the Narrows: the one nearest the Bay, the Flatbush road, and the Bedford road.

These passes are very narrow—the sides exceedingly steep

and rugged, so as to be maintained by a small number against any force whatever, until dislodged from the heights.

An early attention had been paid to these three passes through the hills, and a body of eight hundred men were stationed for the protection of each of them; while Colonel Miles, with a battalion of riflemen, was placed a little to the eastward, in the wood, to guard the road to Jamaica, in order to watch the enemy and keep up a constant communication with the other corps stationed at the passes.

On the approach of the enemy's boats, the patrolling parties on the coast had retired to the guard at the second pass on the Flatbush road. Lord Cornwallis followed at their heels, with his reserve and some hastily collected troops, in the hope of securing the pass; but, finding it already occupied by the Americans, he, in obedience to his orders, made no attempt to dislodge them.

Three days afterward, on the 25th, these forces of the British were reinforced by General De Heister, with two brigades of Hessians, from Staten Island.

It is said that this intrepid officer, who knew nothing of the enemy he was about to confront in battle, was told by one high in command, "that the Americans had determined to give the foreigners no quarter."

"Very well," said De Heister, with the utmost composure, "as I know the terms, I am ready to fight."

The consequence of such mistaken notions was, as might be expected, a desperate ferocity in battle—no giving or taking quarter; and, so far, they may have contributed to the success of the day.

Another circumstance, which undoubtedly contributed to the sanguinary nature of the battle, and the victory of the British, was this: a defeat would have been nothing short of destruction to them. Pressed by a victorious enemy, they might have been prevented from re-embarking—and, perhaps, cut to pieces or made prisoners before they could receive reinforcements. They were *obliged* to conquer. This may be seen by a reference to Washington himself, in a

similar case, when he was placed in a perilous situation, and was supposed to have risked too much.

On the 26th, General Howe, having fully matured a plan for the surprise of General Sullivan, directed General De Heister to post himself at Flatbush in the evening.

This division composed the centre. About nine o'clock in the evening, the main body, led by General Clinton, Earl Percy, and Lord Cornwallis, formed of the best troops in the army, attempted to gain the road, leading round the eastern end of the hills to Jamaica, with a view of turning the American left wing. On this road Colonel Miles was stationed; but, by some unfortunate chance, the enemy were not discovered until they had gained two miles in his rear, when the alarm was instantly given.

Just before daylight on the 27th, Sir Henry Clinton, having advanced within half-a-mile of the road, halted his forces, and made his dispositions for an immediate attack. Everything conspired to favour his enterprise. One of his parties fell in with a patrol of mounted American officers, and took every man of them prisoners; and General Sullivan, depending on them for intelligence, neglected to send out another patrol. He was thus left in complete ignorance of the enemy's approach.

At the first appearance of light, General Clinton, with a battalion of light infantry, took possession of the heights which commanded the road. Some hours before, about midnight, his left wing, under General Grant, which had been advanced to alarm the Americans and conceal his own advance on their left, had been discovered by the guard. This guard, composed entirely of New York and Pennsylvania troops, instantly abandoned the road and fled in the utmost consternation, without firing a gun, and carried to General Parsons the first intelligence of the enemy—who, at that moment, were seen descending the northern side of the hill. About twenty of the fugitives were, fortunately, rallied, and posted on a height about a mile in front of General Grant, who halted and formed his columns for the

attack. This gave time to Lord Stirling, with about fifteen hundred men, to get possession of a hill about two miles from the American camp, and in front of General Grant.

The general engagement began, soon after daylight, by the Hessians, under General De Heister, from Flatbush, and by General Grant, along the coast, and was supported by the Americans with great resolution for a considerable time.

Those who were first met by General De Heister fought with determined gallantry, until they found that General Clinton had gained their left, when they immediately broke and fled toward their camp. It was already too late. General Clinton was in their rear, with the whole body of the British right.

He had passed the heights, halted and refreshed his army, and now charged the Americans, with his dragoons and infantry, just as they had abandoned the hills and were flying to their lines. His attack was irresistible; they were forced back upon the Hessians—the Hessians followed up their charge. And thus were the Americans hemmed in on all sides; driven alternately from the British to the Hessians, from the Hessians to the British: until, grown desperate, they suddenly concentrated—charged the enemy in turn, and cut their way through to their own camp.

The troops, under Lord Stirling, composed of Colonel Atlee's, Smallwood's, and Hache's regiments, with two battalions, under Colonel Miles, were engaged for six hours with the whole British left, under General Grant. These advanced positions of the Americans had been well chosen on the preceding evening. Their disposition was the result of the valuable information brought by Joe Wilder, the scout. But the culpable surprise and unforeseen defection of the American left wing ruined the well-digested plans of the Commander-in-Chief. Nevertheless, he is reported to have said that, without the information upon which he formed his outposts, he would never have been able to save his army from annihilation, by the masterly retreat which followed the disastrous battle.

Lord Stirling's force fought with the determination of veterans. But, owing to the capture of the signal party, so deficient were these fine troops in the means of intelligence, that they were only apprised of the movements of General Clinton by his approach, having traversed the whole country in their rear. Their retreat being thus intercepted, a desperate effort was the only chance of escape ; and a large proportion, after breaking through the enemy's ranks, succeeded in gaining the woods. Many threw themselves into the marsh in Gowan's Cove. Some were drowned, and others perished in the woods ; but a considerable number eventually reached their entrenchments.

The royal troops fought valiantly the entire day. The memory of former defeats, and the desire of retrieving their reputation, stimulated them to their utmost.

The nature of the ground broke up both parties into detachments, and, of course, gave a greater opportunity for distinction. So full of ardour and impetuosity were they after their victory that they could hardly be withheld from immediately storming the American works.

The victorious army encamped in front of the American works on the evening after the battle ; and on the 28th broke ground in form, about five hundred yards in front of Putnam's redoubt, which covered the American left. A regular siege was begun.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RETREAT.

ON the day following the battle, General Mifflin reinforced the Americans with one thousand fresh troops. The next morning, August 29th, in a conversation with the Commander-in-Chief on the subject, he observed :—

“ You must either fight or retreat immediately. What is your strength ? ”

“ Nine thousand,” was the reply.

“ It is not sufficient—we must retreat.”

Such had been Washington's opinion. He never designed

to sustain the regular approach of his enemy. His works were only calculated for temporary defence. It was agreed that a council of war should be convened—that General Mifflin should propose a retreat. But, as he was to make the proposal, and his reputation was at stake, he stipulated that, if a retreat should be resolved upon, he should command the rear; if an action, the van. These measures, among others, were urged in council:—

“The heavy rains which have fallen for two days and nights, with but little intermission, have injured the arms and spoiled a great part of the ammunition; and the soldiers, being without cover, and obliged to lie in their lines, are worn out. From the time the enemy moved from Flatbush, several large ships have attempted to get up, as supposed, into the East River, to cut off our communication, by which the whole army would be destroyed; but the wind being north-east, they have not been able to effect it. The troops have become dispirited by their incessant duty and watchfulness.” Upon this representation of the state of affairs, it was unanimously resolved to abandon the island.

At the commencement of the battle, Joe Wilder had been removed far within the earthworks, out of reach of the danger, which none more than he desired to share. But his wounds had, of course, kept him inactive during the day of battle. His coveted commission as captain was not delayed, however, and he was particularly anxious to cross the river to surprise old Gotlieb, and to kiss his sweetheart. As his wounds were more ugly than serious, he was, at the time the retreat was determined upon, able to be about and to make himself useful. He managed to procure a captain's uniform, and, as General Washington gave him plenty to do in connexion with the preparations for retreat, he hoped soon to surprise the Golden Shark with a real live captain for a guest, as well as to see his dear mother once more. The retreat having been determined upon, preparations were put on foot immediately.

Colonel Glover, with his regiment, was ordered to take

command of the flat-bottomed boats and other vessels, in order to superintend the embarkation. General McDougal and Colonel Knox were stationed at the upper and lower ferries on the East River. The former was on the ground at eight o'clock; but the militia had not then embarked. Many difficulties occurred, which would, at any time, have been thought remarkable; but, at that time, they were thought to be the interposition of that Providence which had suffered them to be so cruelly defeated.

While the troops were assembling on the shore, the tide began to ebb; the wind blew strong from the north-west, and the rapidity of the current made it appear to be impossible to effect the retreat in the course of the night, as they had but few row-boats, and sail-boats could not be used. Under this distressing embarrassment, General McDougal sent Colonel Grayson, one of Washington's aides, to get instructions from the Commander-in-Chief—at the same time pronouncing the retreat to be impracticable for that night. The Colonel was unable to find the General, and, immediately on his return, the embarkation was commenced under all those discouragements. But, about eleven o'clock, the wind died away, and, soon after, a breeze sprung up from the south-west, enabling them to use the sail-boats. Thus, their retreat was rendered safe, easy, and expeditious. The embarkation was still further protected by a fog (so uncommon for the season, that one of the citizens of New York declared he had not known one at that season for twenty or thirty years), which came in a remarkably thick mist about two in the morning, and hovered over the Long Island shore.

The fog and wind continued propitious till the whole army—amounting to nine thousand men—with all their field-artillery, such heavy ordnance as was most valuable, ammunition, provisions, and stores, were safely brought off the island. All this was effected, over a river more than a mile in width, in thirteen hours, most of the time in a violent rain, without the knowledge of the enemy, who were hard at work within six hundred yards.

The water was so remarkably smooth as to admit of the boats being loaded within a few inches of their gunwales.

Scarcely were the works abandoned, and the rear-guard fairly embarked, when the fog cleared away, and four of the American boats were discovered on the river—three about half-way over, full of troops ; and the fourth, in which were a few persons who had stayed for plunder, was so near the shore that it was captured. Shortly afterward the enemy were seen to take possession of the works.

Governor's Island, where two regiments were stationed, was also abandoned at the same time, without loss. The removal of the military stores was completed on the 2nd of September, when nothing was left but a few heavy cannon, notwithstanding several of the enemy's ships-of-war lay within a quarter of a mile.

CHAPTER XIV

A WEDDING AND TWO PRESENTS.

OPPRESSED as General Washington was by the ocean of details which necessarily devolved upon him by the concentration of the army within the limits of New York City, and the consequent anxieties, he did not forget Joe Wilder. The latter had been indefatigable in his attention to his new duties ever since he had got upon his legs again. And, before noon of that day which smiled upon the rescued army, the General had given his aide permission to be absent for a few hours.

Scarcely was the permission received before Joe bounded along State Street, and up Broadway by the Bowling Green. It seemed to him as if weeks instead of days had elapsed since his departure on his dangerous mission. He half expected to find all the gilding worn off the Golden Shark, and to see the tavern which it represented mouldering away from very old age.

But these unpleasant illusions were dissipated as he approached his goal. Everything was as tidy and bright as for-

merly. Old Gotlieb was standing in the doorway, fat, hearty, and dignified as usual. It was the same old place.

Springing up the steps, and jostling past Gotlieb with little ceremony, Joe gained the inside of the tap-room, and, the next instant, with a little scream of delight, Katrina was in his arms.

The rapture was so exuberant, the kisses flew so thick, that old Gotlieb was positively alarmed.

"Dunder und blitzen! Vot you makes when you makes nutting?" he exclaimed. "Didn't I tell you, young feller, dat until you vas von capting—"

"I am a captain!" exclaimed Joe, pointing to the insignia on his shoulder. "And what's more," he continued, "I am an aide-de-camp to General Washington! And what's more, I'm to be named to Congress for a brevet-major!"

"She's yours! Take her—take her! Got pless you both!" said the parent, with an expression of perfect satisfaction. "But, vot you makes? vere you been? Dat is von question."

"Yes, Joe," said Katrina, through the tears which her joy had induced. "Tell us the whole story."

"It's a longer one than you think for," replied her lover. But he nevertheless sat down, with his sweetheart on his knee, and, while the old man brought the beer, commenced the tale of adventure, with which the reader has been made familiar.

When the story was finished, Katrina laid her little head upon Joe's breast, with an inward prayer of thankfulness for his wonderful delivery from death.

As for her father, he had listened to the recital with gaping eyes and mouth—hardly crediting what he heard. When it was finished, he quietly took the young soldier's hand, looked at him doubtingly, and merely ejaculated:—

"Is it drue, my poy? Is it all drue?"

"Truc as gospel," cried the exultant Joe. "General Washington will tell you the same thing."

"I pelieve you, my poy, I pelieve you," said the honest

landlord, shaking him warmly by the hand. "But tell me, is de Sheneral—de real Sheneral Vashington, your frient, my poy?"

"You will have no doubt on that score before long," said Joe; "for General Washington has promised to be present at my wedding, and to give the bride away to me. What do you think of that?"

"Vot! Sheneral Vashington! He give de pride away! Hooray! hooray!" shouted the Dutchman, dancing round the room in the excess of his joy.

Presently, however, he grew more composed, drank two great "scheppens" of beer in quick succession, and, leaning over the counter, took down the old blunderbuss. Bringing it to a "shoulder arms," and assuming his most heroic air, he halted before the young couple, and said:—

"Mine prave poy, 'none but de prave deserves de fair,' de breacher he says; und dat is vot I told mine frau ven we vere courtin', und dat is de reason we vere married. You don't know vat I vas like ven I vas young, eh? I vas young once, I vas; und vas so gay und pooty dat all de gals in de coountry wanted me for a vife. I only took von fraulein, and dat was de pootiest of all de time, mit a foot so little as my hant, und sheeks so red as bricks. You don't know how prave I vas to deserve dat fair one! You vas almost as prave as me. Katrina is one goot girl. She is prave, and you is fair. You vill make vell of it or I makes nutting. If I vas younger, I vould go in once more and vin von oder fair. I vood shoulder mine goot goon, as I now shoulders it, und as I did on Long Island, und vood fight like—"

"What! were you on Long Island?" exclaimed the young soldier.

Old Gotlieb evidently had forgotten himself in the enthusiasm of the moment. Katrina now expected to hear the story of her father's service and sudden return, but was disappointed. Without noticing Joe's question, he proceeded:—

"Vould fight shust like von hundred dogs and cats. Vat

if ve vas vipped on de Long Island. We can vip dem von oder dime. Rely on me, my poy. Call on me ven you wants a regiment. Forward-arms! Shoulder-march?" And Gotlieb began promenading the room, with his young cannon on his shoulder, evidently thinking that he was as "prave" and "pooty" as in his younger days.

It was arranged that Joe's marriage with Katrina should take place upon the second day following this re-union, as it was very uncertain how long the Americans would be able to stay in the city.

The day of days came to find everything in readiness. The honour of Katrina's father was involved, as well as the reputation of the Golden Shark Inn. The landlord had made great preparations for the bride and the bridal feast, and his efforts were a signal success.

We have only, thus far, introduced the reader to the bar-room of the Golden Shark. He has, doubtless, conjectured that there were cozy chambers above that sand-floored tap-room, with a royal kitchen, dining-room, and drawing-room around and behind it. So there were. And upon their wedding-day, before a guest had made his appearance, the long deal-tables of the dining-room were beginning to groan beneath their weight of edibles. The beer-barrels—they put it in barrels in those days—were rolled upon the trucks; the sideboard was pretentious with its rows of decanters; the Dutch waiters were hurrying to and fro, and everything gave token of the approaching feast. Gotlieb was in his glory.

The drawing-room was dressed out in gorgeous array, anticipatory of the occasion. The floor was duly waxed; the dark old furniture rubbed up till it shone again; and the prim array of Dutch admirals and other dignitaries, on the walls, looked more pompous than ever, with wreaths of green foliage round their gilded frames. And there was the improvised altar, behind which the Lutheran preacher was to stand, and before which the lovers were to kneel.

Katrina had also been over the house, looking at the pre-

parations. But it was now ten o'clock in the morning ; she was to become a part of Joe at eleven, and she was up-stairs with her lover's mother and her bridesmaids.

Joe himself had been out and in the house a dozen times, fluttering nervously about, but looking exceedingly bright and happy, in spite of his unhealed wounds. At length the hour drew near. The guests began to arrive.

The old Knickerbockers, with their wives and daughters, came in promiscuously with the multitude of officers and soldiers, most of whom would have come from far off to see brave Joe Wilder united with pretty Katrina, of the Golden Shark. For the fame of our hero had spread afar. The gazettes had chronicled the story of his wonderful adventures ; he was quite a lion, and considered a man of rising fortunes.

At length there was a rustle, as of descending wings, upon the stair, and a hum of admiration grew among the assembled guests of the drawing-room, as the bride appeared, followed by her maids and Joe's mother.

Katrina seemed like a visitant from other spheres. The glistening veil fell almost to her feet, in floating folds ; and her dress was simple, but beautiful, and white as the maiden's soul. Her blushing face was seen through the veil, her perturbation struggling with her smiles. And in many a magic knot and shining twist her beautiful hair, with its wreath of white roses and orange-flowers, was also seen through the veil.

Out stepped our hero, from among his friends, to meet the bride. He was also blushing, but manly and handsome as he only could be, with his new uniform so resplendent that his mother hardly knew him for her son.

The clock struck eleven, but, before the last stroke sounded, the last of the guests entered the apartment ; and there was a general obeisance of respectful heads, for that guest was General George Washington.

With the weight of the new Republic upon his shoulders, the Commander-in-Chief could yet find time to attend the wedding of a man like Joe Wilder.

Up to this time, Gotlieb had done the honours of the occasion with the approbation of every one, and with much complacency to himself, no doubt. But suddenly, as the door was flung open and the name of "General Washington" announced, the worthy proprietor of the Golden Shark was stricken with an unaccountable chill. His vanity melted like snow in the April sun. He wondered how he should greet his illustrious guest. His own personal defects, which he had never acknowledged to himself before, suddenly arose before his mind's eye in exaggerated proportions. He thought of his burly, lumbering form, his red nose, his broken English. He suddenly became a monster of deformity to himself. It is thus that the truly small are self-humbled in the presence of the truly great.

But the honours had to be done. Mustering up his courage to the uttermost, the landlord approached the General, and, with downcast eyes, began to stammer forth words of welcome; when Washington relieved him of all diffidence by grasping his hand and shaking it warmly. That hand-shake lived in Gotlieb's memory like an angel's visit in the remembrance of a saint. It was his boast for the remnant of his days. It served to place him entirely at his ease. The bride was presented to the General with all the dignity of a proud and happy parent. The General was so kind and cordial to her, and to every one else, that a most delightful feeling pervaded the apartment. Especially to Joe's old mother, was the General kind and communicative, speaking of her son's services with eulogy, and of his future with hope, until the old lady was quite beside herself with joy and pride.

We have not time to describe the wedding minutely. The ceremony was performed, the bride given away, and the ample feast in the adjoining apartment devoured with redoubled zest.

After it was all over, then came the grateful ceremony of presenting the bridal gifts. Katrina stood by, surprised and delighted with everything.

But Joe, also, was to have a surprise. For, at this time,

General Washington stepped into the hall, and immediately returned with a handsome sword in his hand. This he presented to Wilder, in the following words :—

“ My friend, I wish to testify to you, by some present, my appreciation of your services to your country. I can think of no fitter testimonial to a soldier than a sword. Pray, accept this one from me. The scabbard is simple and the hilt without a gem ; but the blade is stout and of perfect steel. May you ever wear it with honour, and use it with effect—as I have no doubt you will.”

Joe was surprised and embarrassed. But his confidence quickly returned, and he answered simply :—

“ General, I am grateful, deeply grateful, for your present. Trust me, I shall do my best to honour the weapon.”

Joe looked manlier than ever as he made this little speech, and every one admired his bearing.

The affair was now almost over, but the *finale* was to come.

Gotlieb stepped out of the room, and returned, bearing the old blunderbuss. This he solemnly presented to his son-in-law, with the following dignified speech :—

“ Mine poy, Got pless you. I also prings mit me von bresent to makes you. Vot more appropriate dan de goon of mine forefaders. Take dis ploonderpuss, mine poy. May you vare it mit glory, and use it in your coountry’s cause.”

Every one smiled at the honest landlord. But Joe accepted the present with becoming gravity, and promised never to dim its glory.

Washington smilingly took up the weapon to examine it.

“ How many bullets is a load for it, my friend ?” he asked of Gotlieb, at the same time eyeing the wide-lipped, funnel-shaped muzzle, with an amused expression.

“ Von quart,” was the rejoinder.

“ How would we carry our ammunition, if our troops were armed with such weapons ?” whispered the General to Colonel Miles, who was at his side.

"We should have to provide them with a caisson apiece, instead of cartouch-boxes," replied the officer, smiling.

And that was the end of the wedding.

CHAPTER XV

HAIL TO THE CHIEF.

SEVERAL years after the occurrence of the events we have been narrating, a stranger would have delighted to traverse the streets of New York.

Not that there were not many signs of desolation still. Blackened ruins remained of the great fire that had raged so fiercely, soon after the occupation by the British. There were plenty of tokens of the invader's wantonness remaining. But what it was that would have delighted a stranger was the expression of joy and enthusiasm in the faces of the people.

It was a gala-day in the streets. Thousands of the inhabitants lined the sidewalks. There was evidently some pageant expected; for, now and then, certain little Knickerbocker urchins, perched upon lamp and awning-posts, would sing out, "Here they come!" "No, they don't!" "I tell you, I see the flags!" "And I hear the drums!" "No, you don't, it wants an hour of the time," &c. Children of an older growth were also looking up the streets, with similar exclamations of impatient expectation.

Let us walk down Broadway to the Bowling Green. Here, especially, the crowds are dense. The tap-room stoop of the Golden Shark is crowded with waiting spectators. And there, as I live, is old Gotlieb Von Snooze, looking balder, fatter, and more good-humoured than ever.

He stands in the doorway of the tap-room, and is pouting his lips in a comical way, to make a little fellow of five years old, or thereabouts, laugh at him. And who is that handsome, matronly-looking young lady, who has the aforesaid little fellow by the hand? That is not Katrina, surely? Yes, it is. And she is twice as pretty as she ever was before. There may be a little sadder expression than of old—a tinging

of the exuberance of youth, but her eyes are deep and holy with the cares of motherhood, though very bright at present with the same expectation which fills the entire populace.

"There they come!" for the fiftieth time cried an urchin perched in a locust-tree of the Bowling Green. And this time he spoke the truth.

What was coming? What was the meaning of all this hubbub?

It meant that the American Army, or a portion of it, were about to enter New York once more. The British had evacuated some time before. The war was almost over; and the golden dawn of freedom was brightening in the horizon.

And now the drums³ of the advancing troops are indeed audible, and, from the shouts of the people far up the street, it is evident that they have already entered the town. And here they come, at last, filing past the Golden Shark—bronzed veterans of freedom's fight, every man a hero, with fife and drum in victorious strains, and the battle-baptized banners undulating in the fresh morning sea-breeze.

First came the Connecticut troops, filing past, and then halting on either side of the street, with a hollow square between their ranks. The Rhode Island veterans followed, then the New Yorkers—the latter, especially, being received with tumultuous cheers.

When the lines were thus formed in a long hollow square, the appearance of the troops, from a stand-point in the centre of the street, looking up, was very striking. You saw no holiday soldiers there. They were all veterans—some of them hatless, many of them shoeless and ragged, but all of them hardy and fearless, gun in hand. The redcoats would have laughed at their nondescript, forlorn appearance, but you, gentle reader, you would not have laughed, I am sure.

The citizens ran out with great pails of soup, and other good things, and it was not long before the men were enjoying themselves, though forbidden, as yet, to break ranks.

Gotlieb contributed to their comfort. Cask after cask of

creaming beer was rolled into the street, broached, and served; Katrina moving about among the rude veterans, and serving them with tears in her eyes.

At length the grand band was heard coming down the street, with bray of brass instrument and roll of drum; the quick word of command went along the somewhat disordered ranks, which thereupon immediately closed up at a "present arms."

You could hear the cheering swell down upon you much louder than before, and presently the band made its appearance. Then ascended the thankful cheers of the multitude, civilians and soldiers joining in, for the tried generals and other chieftains of the American Army are following the band.

General Washington comes first. He looks much older than when we first made his acquaintance—but nobler, grander, sublimer, in his majestic mien than ever. The sounds of these greetings must be grateful in his ears.

On his left rides General Mifflin. On his right, waving a hand to his wife, rides Joe Wilder. We must call him colonel now. He is a splendid fellow, but he has only one arm to wave with—the other is shorn off at the shoulder.

Katrina was standing on the stoop when she saw her husband. At first she waved her hand feebly in reply to his distant greeting, and smiled; then she leaned her pretty head upon old Gotlieb's shoulder, and burst into tears. Poor, lonely-hearted Katrina! She had waited six long years to see her husband, and now the joy is too great to bear, without the relief of tears—joyous tears.

The procession moved on. Chieftain after chieftain passed, their careworn features wreathed with smiles.

Then the troops filed in after them, and the entire pageant swept past, to turn up some other street and gratify the thousands which Broadway could not contain. The crowds followed the procession, and, in an hour or so, the space in front of the Golden Shark was almost deserted.

Then Katrina Wilder retired into the parlour of the tavern, along with her little son, and had another good cry

—her panacea for everything. Presently old Mrs. Wilder entered the apartment. She had viewed the procession from an upper window, and had ascribed a portion of Joe's hand-wave as intended for herself—as very probably it was.

"Did you see him, Kitty? Did you see him?" she exclaimed, sitting down by Katrina's side, and clasping her in her arms in the exuberance of her emotion.

The happy wife could only press her mother's hand in reply.

"I saw him, too," cried the little lad. "I know'd it was daddy, if I never did see him before. Golly! he was a nice man!"

The old lady smiled, and took him in her lap.

But now old Gotlieb's voice was heard in a greeting which there was no mistaking. A light foot was heard to spring into the tap-room—a clear voice to exclaim: "Where is she?" and then the same step bounded into the parlour and Katrina was in her husband's embrace.

"My darling! my wife!" was all he could say.

Then came the mother's turn. Then old Gotlieb entered, with the blunderbuss at shoulder-arms, and immediately commenced one of his "forward-marches" up and down the room, and in a manner demoralized by joy; while the little lad whose name was George Washington Wilder, danced round his father, tugging at the tail of his coat, and bawling at the top of excellent lungs: "Daddy, daddy, give us a kiss! Hooray! hooray! here's daddy!"

"My dear little fellow" exclaimed the delighted colonel, catching the urchin with his single arm. "Why, Kitty, what a fine, big fellow he is. And to think of a father with a boy like that, and not to have seen him! Come darling let us improve our acquaintance. What's your name?"

"George Washington Wilder!" was the straightforward reply. "Where's your other arm, daddy?"

"Mouldering in the sod of the Cowpens, my boy," replied the colonel, laughing. "But there's a long story about that arm, which you shall some time hear."

THE SCOUT'S PRIZE.

"Yes, if George is a good boy," said his grandmother.

"He always is goot," exclaimed his grandfather. "I tells you, Sheneral, dat dat dere leetle poy is de gayest leetle poy you ever did saw. He's der plessing of der household, and vill be veil vorthy to possess de goon of mine faders, ven ve bees all kerstauben."

There is little more to add. Our hero served through the entire war with credit and fame. Long after peace was declared, he lived with his beloved wife in New York City, respected and honoured by all, and upon terms of intimacy with General Washington—holding several offices of trust and dignity under special appointment, when the General became the chief-magistrate of the land. The happy pair were blessed with other children, and the sun of their prosperity was cloudless to the close.

Old Gotlieb, also, lasted a long time. He gave up his tavern, and took up his residence in his daughter's house, at the close of the war. There he doubtless danced his grandchildren on his knee to his heart's content, telling them over and over again the history of the blunderbuss, and the account of that immortal hand-shake which he received from the Father of his Country.

THE END.



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